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BUDDHIST ART

IN ITS RELATION TO

BUDDHIST IDEALS

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BUDDHISM IN JAPAN

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PLATE I

Amita Triad rising over Hills

Traditionally ascribed to Eshin Sōzu Genshin

Japanese, 942–1017

Owned by the Konkai Kōmyō-ji, Kyōto,
and now deposited in the Imperial Museum, Kyōto

This group of Amita Buddha with Kwannon on the right and Seishi on the left is generally believed by critics to be a work of the Kamakura period (thirteenth century); but in the author's opinion the traditional ascription should be accepted. The text inscribed on the two upper corners expresses the artist's devotion to Buddha, and in this inscription the author sees Eshin's autograph.

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON

BUDDHIST ART

IN ITS RELATION TO BUDDHIST IDEALS

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BUDDHISM IN JAPAN

FOUR LECTURES GIVEN
AT THE MUSEUM

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in Harvard University
1913–1915

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
M·DCCCC·XV

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Published November 1915

DEDICATED TO
THE PIOUS AND BEAUTIFUL SOUL
OF
SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Di questa costa, là dov' ella frange
Più sua ratezza, nacque al mondo un sole,
Come fa questo talvolta di Gange.

Però chi d'esso loco fa parole
Non dica Ascesi, chè direbbe corto,
Ma Oriente, se proprio dir vuole.

DANTE, *Paradiso.*

PREFACE

The present volume is the result of four Thursday Conferences given at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in January and February of 1914. The object of the lectures was, as the title expresses it, to elucidate the ideas and ideals which inspired Buddhist artists, and to give some account of the legends which they illustrated. In treating of these matters I have dwelt very largely on Japanese Buddhism, not only because it is a subject with which I am intimate, but also because I think Japanese Buddhism is representative, more than Indian and Chinese, of a continuous development both in doctrine and in art. If I had attempted a history of Buddhist art in all the phases of its development, my plan must necessarily have been quite different. In that case, the derivation of Chinese Buddhist art from Indian sources in the centuries preceding the sixth, the development of the T'ang art into that of the Sung and then into the Japanese art of the fourteenth century, and other similar matters, would have been discussed. But in spite of the rich material brought out in recent years from China and central Asia, and in spite of the systematic studies made by scholars on the relics of Chinese art existing in Japan, there are various obscure points, such as the relation between the diverse streams of Indian art and the Chinese art of the sixth and seventh centuries, or the origin of the *Shingon* (or *Mantra*) Buddhism and of its iconography, at which it has been possible merely to hint in the following pages. Thus the main purpose of the present volume is to provide an elucidation of Buddhist art in its developed form, though endeavors have also been made to show its intrinsic connection with the fundamental ideas of Buddhism. Let me add that inasmuch as the paintings, statues, etc., reproduced throughout the book are primarily intended to illustrate the Buddhist religion, it has been necessary, in one or two instances, to introduce objects of secondary importance as examples of Buddhist art.

And here I would say a few words in regard to my personal contact with

Buddhist art. I was born in Kyōto, the centre of Japanese Buddhism and Buddhist art, and was, in my early years, quite intimate with the relics of art stored in the temples in and about the city. But my sense for art was overshadowed by my study of philosophy, especially of English agnosticism. Later, when I studied German idealism, during my student years in Tōkyō and in Germany, a revival of Buddhist idealism became a powerful factor of my mental life, and enabled me to appreciate more deeply than ever before the ideals of the Buddhist and the Christian religions. My journeys in Italy, in 1902 and in 1908, especially the latter, had the effect of awakening my remembrance of Buddhist art, and thus a high admiration for Buddhist painting has become inseparably connected with a similar feeling for that of the Italian Quattrocentists, just as my devotion to Hōnen, the pietist saint of Japanese Buddhism, has been linked with my reverent attachment to the Christian saint who preached to birds and wrote the Canticle of the Sun. This I say in order rather to explain my reasons for dedicating this volume to St. Francis of Assisi, than to afford an opportunity for speaking of myself. May I hope that my Catholic friends, especially those of the Order of Minor Friars, will not take this as a sacrilege?

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express my gratitude to Dr. Fairbanks, Director of the Museum, who first suggested the publication of these lectures in book form; to Mr. F. S. Kershaw, who was kind enough to give me the benefit of his comment on the first two lectures; and particularly to Dr. W. S. Bigelow, who has afforded me much indispensable encouragement and advice. Special thanks, however, are due to Mr. J. E. Lodge, Assistant Curator in Charge of the Department of Chinese and Japanese Art, who has done everything for me in selecting material, in revising the manuscripts, and in supervising the publication; — indeed without his kind and painstaking help this book would have been impossible.

M. Anesaki.

Cambridge, *May, 1914.*

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The following brief indications may be found helpful in the pronunciation of unfamiliar Sanskrit, Pāli, Chinese, and Japanese words.

In Sanskrit and Pāli, the vowels are pronounced as in Italian or Spanish; *ś* and *ṣ* are soft, — something like *sh* in English; *ḍ* and *ṭ* are pure lingual consonants, — not dental as in English; *ṇ* is also a pure lingual consonant, — not nasal; *th* and *dh* are pronounced like the italicized letters in the phrases 'hi*t h*ard' and 'har*d h*it' respectively.

In Chinese, according to Wade's system of transliteration, *a* is usually long as in 'father'; *e* short as in 'yet'; *ê*, much like the vowel sound in the German 'schön,' except before *n*, when it is like the vowel sound in 'sun'; *i* long as in 'machine,' except before *n*, when it is short as in 'pin'; *o* not quite so broad as the 'aw' in 'saw'; *u* like the vowel sound in 'too,' except before *n*, when it resembles the vowel sound in 'look'; *ü* like the French 'u' in 'du'; *ŭ*, something like the vowel sound in the first syllable of 'surround'; *ou*, something like the vowel sound in 'foe'; *ai* as in 'aisle'; *ei* like the vowel sound in 'say'; in other vowel combinations each letter retains its original force; *ch* is hard as in 'church'; *j* is soft like the 's' in 'vision'; *hs* approximately like 'sh' in English. The inverted comma in *T'ang*, *Ch'an* and other words indicates a gentle aspirate.

In Japanese the vowels are sounded as in Italian or Spanish. Each member of a diphthong or other vowel combination retains its original force, and the important distinction between a long and a short vowel results from duration of utterance rather than from any change in sound. The consonants are pronounced approximately as in English. *G* is hard as in 'give,' and double consonants should be pronounced really double, as in 'sho*t-t*ower' or 'coc*k-c*row.' There is practically no tonic accent, though a similar effect is produced by the prolongation of the long vowels and by the enunciation of double consonants.

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BUDDHIST ART

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BUDDHIST ART IN ITS RELATION TO BUDDHIST IDEALS

I

THE LIFE OF BUDDHA, THE FOUNDATION OF THE BUDDHIST RELIGION, AND THE BEGINNING OF ITS ART

It is almost needless to say that art and religion are two of the most potent factors of human life. Art stimulates fancy by visualizing and perpetuating beauty; it also tranquillizes the mind of man by inducing it to contemplate what underlies the loveliness of forms and colors. Religion gives man new life; it is an inspiration to the vigorous and a consolation to the weak; it incites man to activity, even to the risk of death, but it also pacifies him and transforms the wolf into a lamb. These two factors have almost always been associated throughout the history of mankind. Religious faith has invariably found expression in art, which, in turn, has derived the inspiration of its highest achievement from religion. Is this association of art and religion a chance, a passing phenomenon, or is there any necessary connection inherent in the nature of both? On this point it is not my purpose to theorize; I shall try, rather, to illustrate the inner relationship of Buddhist art and religion by tracing to their source the ideals and beliefs of Buddhism.

Before taking up my subject, however, there is one matter to which I would call attention. Curiously there prevails in the West an impression that Buddhism is a religion of mere negation and pure abstraction. Here I shall not argue. I simply wish to point out that he will never understand Buddhist art who does not free his mind from such a preconception. Buddhism exhorts its followers to overstep the bounds of self and enter the ideal community of spiritual life. This teaching is, to be sure, a negation of the bondage of individual limitations; but it is equally an affirmation of a life broader than the individual. It may be called withdrawal from

the material world, but it is also an entrance into the larger world of ideals. It was this breadth of mental vista and depth of sympathy that made Buddhism a universal religion and gave inspiration to artistic genius. The ideal of the Buddhist faith consists in realizing, through spiritual experience and in moral acts, the continuity of life in man and nature and the fellowship of all beings. This ideal was the soil which nourished the stem of the Buddhist religion and the flowers of Buddhist art. The seed sown was the person of Buddha, the Sage of the Śākya clan, who was born about twenty-five hundred years ago in India. He proclaimed this ideal to mankind, and it was the pious remembrance of his person, on the part of his followers, that gave to Buddhist art its first impetus. Who, then, was he? What did he teach?

It was among the luxurious growth of a tropical flora, in the royal gardens at Kapilavastu, at the foot of the Himālayas, that a young prince pondered over the questions pressing upon his mind: What is life? Whence have we come? Whither are we going? The foliage and flowers swaying in the glorious sunshine, the snow-clad peaks floating far off in the pale moonlight, the fireflies glowing in the darkness of night and flying in swarms among the trees, — each of these seemed to him to be telling of the evanescence of worldly things. The gay sing-song of the dancing-girls, the melodies of lutes and cymbals, the gorgeous feasts and processions, the ostentatious celebration of festivals, all these things, offered for his pleasure, were but torture inflicted upon his meditative mind. At last the worldly life of a prince became unbearable to him. He fled out of his father's palace and became a recluse. Wandering among forests he thought over the same problems again and again, seeking a final solution. "Life is subject to age and death. Where is the realm of life in which there is neither age nor death? What is our life, — made up of body and mind, of perceptions and emotions? Is there no haven where we can be free from sorrows and agonies?" Years passed in these meditations and in the practice of self-mortification.

At last, while he was sitting under the pendent branches and rustling

leaves of a *pippala* tree near Gayā, and when the morning star glittered in the transparent sky of the east, the light of illumination dawned upon his mind. The final solution was, after all, quite a simple one: that selfishness is the root of all sorrows and vices. Peace came to his mind with the conviction that man is tormented by greed for gain or by sorrow for loss simply because he is held captive within the narrow limits of self-interest, and that beyond this captivity stretches out a vast expanse of universal life. The individual is destined to die, together with the passing phases of his existence. But life itself never dies, since it persists in the lives of those who have grasped the truth and found the real life in that which is common to all. This is the truth of universal and everlasting life, the basic unity and the ultimate goal of all separate existences. In this new life the solitary seeker realized his spiritual fellowship with the Enlightened (*Buddha*) or Truth-winners (*Tathāgata*) of the past, sages of old who had trodden the same way and reached the final destination. His whole being underwent a complete transformation through the force of his simple but permanent acceptance of life transfigured into the universal communion of truth. The lonely recluse had become a *Buddha* or *Tathāgata*. Then he bathed in the cool water of the river flowing past his seat and cleansed his body just as he had cleansed his mind. For a while he remained under the *pippala* tree[1] and enjoyed, in the serene atmosphere of the shadowy spot, the light of his spiritual illumination.

Once a royal prince, then an ascetic, and at last a Truth-winner, he was no more a slave of life and of its pleasure and pain, but a master of the truth of universal life. Yet there remained for him a further question: Should he enjoy this enlightenment within himself alone, as former sages had done, or should he proclaim it to others, that they might be induced to seek the same attainment? While he was thinking of this, it is said, Brahmā, the lord of the heavenly hosts, came down to his side and admonished him to enlighten others in the same truth. Buddha looked with his spiritual eyes the world over, and compassion for his fellow beings took

[1] Thereafter called the *Bodhi* tree, because under it Buddha attained *Bodhi* (Enlightenment). The corrupt form, *Bo* tree is also common.

possession of his mind. He saw them, as it is told, like lotus stems and buds in a lake, some immersed in the mud, others coming out of it or just appearing above the water, and still others beginning to blossom. Seeing this he determined to bring them all to full bloom and to the bearing of fruit.[1] In other words, he became convinced of the possibility and necessity of extending the communion of the Truth-winners to all sentient beings, who should in turn become the future Truth-winners. The spiritual tie which connected his life with the sages of old must be destined to embrace those still outside the pale; because the truth, by realization of which he had become the Buddha, should be common to the lives and minds of all. Every one overcoming the restrictions of his selfish envelope could realize his spiritual fellowship with all others and could practice that ideal relation in the transfigured life of love and compassion. Moreover, it was clearly seen by Buddha that his own perception of the truth would be in vain, unless it should really lead his fellow beings to the same communion of universal life.

Faithful to his conviction and firm in his determination, Buddha started on a missionary journey, "to turn the indestructible wheel of truth," "to pour the blessing-rain of truth," for the sake of others. With this purpose he turned his steps to Kāśī (Benares), the holy metropolis of all India, and preached there to five ascetics, who were soon converted to his faith. This was the first step toward realizing the extension of the ideal community of life, the nucleus of the Buddhist communion (*Sangha*) among mankind. It is said that all the heavenly hosts came together at the scene of the sermon and sang in adoration of the Truth (*Dharma*). An Enlightened One, a sage, thus became the Master of Truth and the leader of men and celestial beings. The *Tathāgata* was no more the "One who has gone beyond," but the "One who has come down" to lead others; not only the Truth-winner, but also the Truth-revealer; and Buddha's person as such a Truth-revealer, together with the *Dharma* he revealed and the

[1] For the description of these steps in Buddha's determination, see K. E. Neumann, *Die Reden Gotamo Buddho's*, vol. I, pp. 259–79. Attention is also called to the importance of the simile of the lotus, especially in reference to the "Lotus of Truth" of which I shall presently speak (*page 15 ff*). Brahmā, the Heavenly Lord, as he appears in a Japanese work of sculpture, will be referred to in the second chapter.

Sangha he founded, make up the Three Treasures, or Holy Trinity, of the Buddhist religion.

Soon the Buddhist communion was extended, in the early stages of Buddha's ministry, to tens and hundreds. These the Master sent to preach everywhere "the Truth which is glorious at its start, glorious at its climax, glorious in its consummation," for the "weal and the welfare of many people, and out of compassion for the world."[1] Buddha himself passed the rest of his life, nearly fifty years, in missionary journeys, in preaching his gospel, consoling the afflicted, rescuing pest-stricken regions, and mediating between combatant parties. He was revered as the Master, the Lord of Truth, the King of Law.[2] His community embraced all those who followed him, without regard to distinctions of caste or capability. His disciples went everywhere in India, even outside its boundaries and beyond the Indus to countries inhabited by fierce barbarians. Missions to foreign lands were carried out still more extensively and vigorously in the third century B.C. by the pious King Aśoka, penetrating even to Greece and Egypt in the West and to the inland borders of China in the East. These missionary activities had important bearing not only upon the propagation of Buddhist teachings, but also upon the development of its art, as we shall presently see.

Thus it was the personal inspiration of Buddha that laid the foundation of his religion, the religion taught by him as well as the religion of faith in him. This religion was the result of his enlightenment, through which he achieved the transformation of his life by entering the community of the Truth-winners and embracing all fellow beings in the same communion. The actual community of the Buddhists, or Buddhist Church, was a manifestation and realization of the ideal communion grasped in Buddha's spiritual illumination. And here the question arises: What was the source of the artistic inspiration which Buddhism developed so opulently? In other words: Was Buddha himself an artist, or had Buddhism any inherent

[1] A. J. Edmunds, *Buddhist and Christian Gospels*, vol. I, pp. 225–26.

[2] This is a very important point in Buddhist faith, which many Western scholars fail to grasp. Later on we shall see a development of this idea in the identification of Buddha's person with cosmic life. Compare Edmunds, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 83.

tendency to express itself in art? Our answer is affirmative, with a certain special extension in the meaning of the words "art" and "artist." Buddhism offered three sources of artistic inspiration. The first is the conception of life implied in Buddha's personality and proclaimed by his teachings. The second is a consequence of the first and consists in the pious memory of the Master cherished among his followers. The third, another corollary of the first, is the practice of dedication based on the ideal of universal communion.

Buddha was an artist, not, I dare say, in the sense that he ever worked with brush or chisel, but in the sense that his perception of life was artistic. Who would deny that Christ was artistically inspired, when he saw the glory of God in the lilies of the field? Who would doubt the indebtedness of Giotto and Dante to St. Francis of Assisi, or would hesitate to see in the pious and beautiful soul of Francis a living fountain of artistic inspiration? Just in the same way Buddha, too, was an artist; because he perceived in man and in nature the vital and sympathetic tie which bound them to his own soul. Every thing and every fellow being is embraced in his spiritual life, and thus enters into an ultimate connection with his ideal. Nothing is left outside the bounds of his sympathy; all is vivified by the touch of personal relation. This is the process of idealization, the secret of artistic creation; and Buddha grasped this secret in his conception of universal communion and through his training in the transformed life. A metaphoric description of this artistic sympathy is best given by the simile of plants in the "Lotus of Truth."

Similarly based on a broad sympathy is the fourfold "infinite emancipation or expansion of mind."[1] This expansion of mind implies a practice of meditation in love, compassion, joy and equanimity, by means of which the practitioner's consciousness is extended and embraces ideally all fellow beings in an infinitely expanded vision. Indeed, Buddha was a man of vi-

[1] For descriptions of the method and its results, see Rhys Davids, *The Dialogues of the Buddha*, vol. I, pp. 317–18.

sion in the best sense, and it is perhaps beyond our power to estimate how vividly he realized the continuity of life through his spiritual eyes. But, on the other hand, Buddhism is by no means a religion of mere ecstasy. Its meditative training, together with the practice of charity in various ways,[1] results in a total transformation of life through the realization, first in idea and then in acts, of one's spiritual connection and sympathetic accord with mankind and surrounding nature.

According to Buddhist view, the sphere of fellowship comprises not only all living creatures, but also supernal beings high in heaven, and the spirits inhabiting nature. Moreover, the strong impressions received by Buddha and his followers from animals and plants and the imposing landscapes of India, worked so deeply upon their minds that their feeling toward nature played an essential part in their idea of fellowship. Perhaps in no other religion are animals and flowers treated with such intimacy as in Buddhism, not only in the way of similes, but also in concrete manifestations of tender sympathy.[2] It is no wonder that Buddha's sermons and the mental training of his disciples were closely connected with the love of nature, when we consider that most of their time was spent in the open, under the pendent branches of banyan trees, amidst the fragrance of *sāla* flowers, by the side of flowing streams or bubbling springs, or on hills and among rocks. This is the reason why the expansion of consciousness toward the infinite mind is, to take one of many instances, likened to the all-permeating pale moonlight and to a trumpet sound reverberating through the profound serenity of a tropical night.[3] In addition, we must remember that these and other metaphors were not mere figurative expressions, but represented experiences derived from the natural grandeur or repose surrounding the scene of tranquil meditation. In a word, the

[1] The more usual are: giving, gentle words, benevolence and common benefit, the necessary consequences of the Buddhist conception of life.

[2] The representation of animals and trees in Buddhist sculpture will be presently spoken of. For animal stories, see Rhys Davids, *The Buddhist Birth Stories; Jātaka*, translated by various scholars and edited by Cowell, in six volumes. The existing version of Æsop's Fables owes much to these Buddhist stories; see the introduction to the above book by Rhys Davids.

[3] Many of the similes of nature in Buddha's sermons may be found in K. E. Neumann, *Die Reden Gotamo Buddho's*. Poems by early Buddhists are translated in Mrs. Rhys Davids' *The Psalms of the Early Buddhists;* and in K. E. Neumann's *Die Lieder der Mönchen und Nonnen Gotamo Buddho's*.

love of nature played a vital part in the Buddhist conception of life and its continuity.

Thus the ideal communion of the Buddhist faith comprised all kinds of existences, actual and imaginary, in men and in nature. The expansion of Buddha's spiritual being, wrought by this new conception of life, became the fountain-head of an inexhaustible inspiration in religion and morals, in art and poetry. All that he had once regarded as causes of sorrow and signs of evanescence was transfigured into delightful and inspiring testimony to his ideal fellowship with men and nature. This new aspect of life, now realized by the Master and inspired in his followers, was expressed as the gospel of the *Ekayāna*, or all-embracing Sole Road, whose rule should be the universal fellowship of life. This Sole Road is the Pathway to Immortality[1] and its final goal is *Nirvāna*, the eternal haven of life, the realm of spiritual communion.[2] To recapitulate, this ideal of the ultimate unity of all existences is the source, in Buddha's life and teaching, from which Buddhist art derived its profoundest and most enduring inspirations.

Now we come to the second point in the inspiration of Buddhist art. The communion of life was, for the Buddhists, not a mere ideal vision but an actual fact realized in Buddha's life, in his conversion and in his inspiration. The Truth-winner and Truth-revealer, the Master, was believed by his disciples to be a personal testimony, an incarnation, of what he preached. Faith, not only in the truth but also in the person of Buddha, was what distinguished Buddhism preëminently from any of the older religions of India, and it was this personal influence that gave vitality to the Buddhist religion and its art. It is quite natural that the impressions given by Buddha's personality should have been faithfully and piously kept on record, together with the vivid effect of fellowship produced by the assembly of his followers united in heart and in the common ideal. How deeply his disciples were moved by the dignity of the Master, when he sat among his hearers "like a lion among animals," and preached with authority "like the lion's roar"! How respectfully the people met the Sage of the Śākya clan, going through the streets, "like the elephant king,"

[1] Pāli, *amatam padam*.

[2] I take these expressions from the *Samyutta-Nikāya*, chapter 43, one of the oldest Buddhist texts.

calm and dignified at the head of hundreds of followers![1] A monk poet sang: —

To-day, at full moon, for full purity
Five hundred brethren are together come.
They all have cut their fetters and their bonds;
Seers who are free from re-birth and from ill.

And as a king who ruleth all the world,
Surrounded by his councillors of state,
Toureth around his empire everywhere,
Driving throughout the lands that end in sea,
. . . . . .

So him, who is our victor in the fight,
The peerless Master of our caravan,
We followers attend and wait upon,
Who hold the triple lore, slayers of Death.

All we are sons of the Exalted One.
No sterile babbler is among us found.
I worship him who strikes down craving's darts.
I greet the offspring of the Sun's great line.[2]

Closely connected with the ideal of communion and stimulated by the personal remembrance of the Master, the idea and practice of dedication[3] played a great part in the religion and art of Buddhism. The whole cosmos, according to the Buddhist view, is a stage on which may be realized that fellowship among all living beings whereof the Buddhist community, united in faith and practices, is an actual manifestation. Spiritual fellowship, however, is existent and attainable not only in the visible community but also throughout the unlimited extent of universal life. That is to say, each thought of man is pulsating with the heart-beat of the cosmic life, and when an individual acts and speaks he is playing an integral part in the motion and expression of the universe. Therefore his deeds and intentions can never be totally isolated from the lives of others, though the connection may sometimes be hidden and often unknown to the individual

[1] The appearance of the lion and the elephant in Buddhist sculpture will be taken up later in this chapter and in chapter III.

[2] Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Psalms of the Early Buddhists, The Brethren*, pp. 402–03.

[3] Sanskrit, *pariṇāmanā;* Japanese, *ekō.*

himself. The duty and joy of every Buddhist, that is, of every one who dwells in the all-embracing Communion of Life with conviction thereof, must lie in doing every deed, speaking every word and thinking every thought, with the pious intention of dedicating his best to the profit of all. The whole universe is the "Field of Merits"[1] in which the seeds of pious desire are sown and the harvest of merit is reaped. Dedication, in desire and in acts, is the means of realizing the communion and extending it to those who are still unaware of it. Consecrate a flower to the tomb of one dead; it is not only an expression of the spiritual communion existing between the dead and the living, but it may also induce into the same communion any one who might be impressed by the beauty of the flower or by the motive for its dedication. Any other meritorious action — such as giving food, nursing the sick, building a temple — may be dedicated to the Communion of Life and, perhaps, result in converting others. Thus the practice of dedication in thought and deed has ever been a great inspiring factor in the piety of Buddhists (Plate II).

The new religion inaugurated by Buddha asserted its influence upon the moral life of his disciples and also expressed its faith and ideals in the forms of architecture and sculpture. The first manifestation of artistic activity among the Buddhists was seen in the memorials built in honor of the relics of the deceased Master. After Buddha's death his relics were divided among the various kingdoms which had embraced his faith, and each portion was deposited in a crystal pot filled with golden flowers and enclosed in an iron casket. Mounds (*stūpa*) or chapels (*caitya*) were erected as repositories for these precious relics, and a little later palings and gateways were built around these memorials. In symbolic design, the palings were intended to represent the circle of the communion, and the gateways stood for the entrance to the Sole Way of salvation. Ceremonies were performed about the mounds or in the chapels, and processions marched around the reliquaries. These structures were embellished with relief carvings which show the earliest work of Buddhist sculptors. The

[1] Pāli, *puñña-kkhetta;* Sanskrit, *puṇya-kṣetra;* Japanese, *fuku-den.*

PLATE II

A Buddhist Memorial Stela

PLATE II

A Buddhist Memorial Stela

Chinese, dated 554 A.D.

Owned by Hervey E. Wetzel, Esq., and now deposited in The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The scenes depicted are based chiefly on the Lotus of Truth (*see p. 15 ff.*) and represent various aspects of the Buddhist Communion of Saints. The uppermost part, which is, unfortunately, much broken, seems to have illustrated the story told in chapter XXII of the Lotus, to the effect that the *Bodhisattva* Bhaiśājya-rājā (Chinese, *Yao-wang*), after he had been born as a son to King Vimaladatta, delivered a sermon to his father and then ascended to heaven, being mounted on a pedestal decorated with the seven kinds of jewels. We see here in the remains of an inscription, a Chinese ideograph denoting "king," above which the name of Vimaladatta probably appeared. The figure immediately to the right would thus be that of the king, and the knees on a bench-like pedestal still further to the right would belong to the *Bodhisattva*.

The next register below evidently represents the meeting of the two Buddhas, Śākya-muni (Chinese, *Shih-chia*) and Prabhūta-ratna (Chinese, *To-pao*), in the heavenly shrine, as told in chapter XI of the Lotus. The two figures of *Bodhisattva* standing beside the Buddhas are Bhaiśājya-rājā and Avalokiteśvara (Chinese, *Kuan Yin*), who are most prominently mentioned in the Lotus as protectors of the Buddhist religion and its believers in the latter days of the world. To the left of Bhaiśājya-rājā is a figure sitting under a tree; and to the right of Avalokiteśvara, an ascetic sitting in a cave. Of these two the former was probably meant to represent Buddha in his princely life, meditating in his garden; while in the latter he appears as a recluse, before his attainment of Buddhahood.

The scene in the third register shows Buddha with his two great disciples, Ānanda (Chinese, *A-nan*) and Mahā-Kāśyapa (Chinese, *Chia-yeh*), on his left and right respectively. On either side of the central group, and separated from it by a decorative partition, is a group consisting of a Padma-pāṇi and a Vajra-pāṇi, also protectors of the religion. Below this register there stands a reliquary to which four noblemen, the chief donors of the monument, each accompanied by a horse and pages, come to pay homage.

The whole thing was made, as the inscription at the bottom expresses it, under the West Wei dynasty, to dedicate the merit (of causing the carving to be done) to the welfare of the country and the people, especially the ancestors, parents, and friends of the donors, who are enumerated to the extent of about two hundred men and women. A remarkable point in the technique is that the Buddhas and Buddhist figures are carved in pronounced relief, quite in the style of the carvings at Bharhat or Sanchi, while the figures of the Chinese noblemen are executed almost after the old Chinese method of chiselled drawing. The other three sides of the stone display the various but typified figures of the donors, also cut in the lowest possible relief. The workmanship of the Buddhist figures is interesting as an example of the Indian influence which so affected the rise of Buddhist art in China, Korea, and Japan in the sixth and seventh centuries. The drapery of the two Buddhas in the second register is especially striking as a combination of Indian and Chinese influences, and it is this resultant style that found its further development in the statues of Hōryū-ji.

Compare also, E. Chavannes, in *T'oung Pao*, vol. XIV, no. 2, pp. 272–80; and in *Ars Asiatica*, vol. II, pp. 20–29.

PLATE III

Top of the North Gateway to the Great Stūpa at Sanchi, India, seen from within

PLATE III

Top of the North Gateway to the Great Stūpa at Sanchi, India, seen from within

Reproduced from Burgess's "The Ancient Monuments, Temples, and Sculptures of India"

Carved in relief, in the middle of the uppermost cross-piece, is the *Bodhi* tree, to which elephants are paying homage; and, at the intersection with the uprights, are winged, antelope-like animals unknown to Buddhist legend.

On the middle cross-piece, the hosts of the Evil Ones (Sanskrit, *Māra*) are threatening the prince, who is shown seated a little to the left of the centre, and still further to the left are a man, his wife and child, and the *Bodhi* tree. The birds on the terminals are peacocks (Sanskrit, *maurya;* Pāli, *moriya*) representing the dynasty of King Aśoka.

On the lower cross-piece is a scene, beginning at the left terminal, which shows a palace surrounded by terraces and towers, a horseman, — probably intended for the Buddha in his princely estate, — a procession, a forest, a village, a hermitage in front of which a sacrificial fire burns, and finally, on the right terminal, a number of people and animals in another part of the forest.

oldest of such sculptures are, perhaps, the palings of Bharhat [1] (fourth century B.C.?), and the progress of the glyptic art in the third century B.C., during the reign of King Aśoka, can be traced in the carved palings of Buddha-Gayā and Sanchi.[2] Another treatment of sculpture is shown in the lions and elephants on top of the commemorative pillars which were erected by the king at places associated with important events in Buddha's life.

Now these carvings represent, for the most part, assemblies of believers before the Master. Such assemblies were, as I have said, a concrete manifestation of the Buddhist ideal of spiritual communion, and the fact that the early Buddhist sculptors worked on this subject shows the inspiring effect of the ideal upon their artistic genius. In the centre of the assembly there is always a symbolic representation of Buddha's person, such as the holy wheel (*cakra*) symbolizing the eternal truth revealed by him, or a vacant seat on which he used to sit, or the *Bodhi* tree under which he attained Buddhahood. Indeed the person of Buddha was too sacred and sublime to be represented, by the early Buddhist artists, as a human figure.[3] On the other hand, the believers who are paying homage to the central figure are shown as living beings: men and women bringing garlands, angels hovering in the sky and perhaps singing in Buddha's praise, and animals sharing the communion and offering flowers. It is to be noted that elephants play the most prominent part among these animals, and also that lions are seated on the beams of the gateways. Flowers, too, are lavishly represented, generally in decorative medallions on the palings; and in this connection one may well recall Buddha's vision of lotus flowers symbolizing various conditions of mankind. So far I have spoken with reference chiefly to the carvings at Sanchi (Plate III). Other scenes, however, suggested by the stories of Buddha's past existences in animal form, or by various incidents of his human life, are executed on the palings and columns of Bharhat, — all without human figures of Buddha. But though the sculpture of Bharhat has no characteristic other than charming *naïvelé*, that of Sanchi shows a great advance in delicate finish and compound grouping.

[1] Now deposited in the India Museum, Calcutta.

[2] Near Bhopal.

[3] He is, however, freely represented as a young prince, i. e., before he attained to Buddhahood.

While glyptic representation of the Buddhist faith was gaining ground among Indian Buddhists, the artistic genius of the Greeks came into play, and not only contributed to the refinement of the art but also effected a significant change. The Greeks left behind by Alexander's expedition had established a kingdom in the northwest of India. In due course many of them were converted to Buddhism and worked out the newly embraced beliefs in sculpture. They took, it is true, the same subjects as their Indian brothers, representing the life of Buddha, or assemblies of the communion before the Master; but the Greek ideal of personal beauty could not long fail of application to the person of the revered Perfect Being. Buddha, the "hero of the Solar Race," the "Light of the World which dispelled the darkness of illusion," was represented by the Græco-Indian artists in all the beauty of an Apollo. The symbolic wheel was transferred to the decoration of his chair, and in the vacant seat was an Apollo Musagetes, with bright eyes and waving hair. The human beings paying homage to the central figure were clothed in Indian robes, but the celestial lords, Brahmā and Indra, were represented like Zeus and Achilles (Plate IV, A & B). Needless to say, such influences contributed greatly to the enrichment of Buddhist sculpture; and the most significant innovation — the one destined to become a permanent factor in Buddhist art — was undoubtedly the actual representation of the person of Buddha himself. Whether the anthropomorphic figures of Buddha are the product solely of Greek genius, is still a difficult and far-reaching historical question whose discussion would lead me beyond the scope of my present subject. Suffice it to point out that the Buddhist statues of southern India can hardly be designated as the outcome of Greek influence; and that, moreover, even in the sculpture of Northern Buddhism, in Central Asia, China, Korea, and Japan, there seem to have been two schools of sculptural art, one of which is decidedly Greek, while the other is not.

There are also various interesting points which might be mentioned in connection with the origins of Buddhist painting and temple building; but we must leave these out of consideration here, because, in the present state of knowledge, they pertain rather to archæology than to art history. After

PLATE IV (A & B)

Gandhārā Sculptures

PLATE IV (A & B)

GANDHĀRĀ SCULPTURES

SECOND CENTURY, A. D.

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

A. NIRVĀṆA: the dying Buddha surrounded by his followers. On the left, close to the figure of Buddha, stands Indra, holding his symbolic thunderbolt in his left hand. On the right is a monastic disciple, probably Ānanda, and in the background is a group of lay men and women.

B. THE TEMPTATIONS: Buddha, with Seduction on his right and Violence on his left.

A

B

all we can be pretty sure that early Buddhist painting treated similar subjects in a style analogous to that of the relief carvings, and that in the course of time the temples were built more and more as places of assembly and worship. We cannot doubt the inspiring effect of Buddhist ideals upon these branches of art, which found their way wherever the religion was propagated. The beginning of the Buddhist religion in a small community of Buddha's disciples, the rise of Buddhist sculpture after his death, the rapid development of Buddhist art partly through the contribution of the Greeks, the spread of the religion together with its art to China and Japan, — these steps will remain forever a marvel of human achievement inspired by the zeal of faith. Herein we can discern the subtle but close connection between religious faith and artistic inspiration; and the connection becomes more manifest and vital in the developed form of Buddhism known as the *Mahāyāna*, the Greater Vehicle or Broader Communion,[1] which we are now about to consider.

From the very beginning, it was the belief of Buddhists that their communion included all things visible and invisible. They imagined the presence of heavenly hosts in the congregation of believers; the *Mahā-samaya*, or Great Assembly, as it is called, was believed to embrace all celestial beings; and to them are ascribed various songs, of which the following may serve as an example: —

Great is the gathering in the glade!
The hosts of heaven together met!
We too are come unto this congress blest,
And fain would see the Company Invincible.

The brethren there, wrought up
To concentration rapt, make straight their hearts,
Wisely, as driver keeping grip on rein,
Their faculties they guard.

[1] It is called the Greater in contrast to the Lesser Vehicle (*Hīnayāna*), not to the original Buddhism, as is often wrongly supposed. The books of the Broader Communion seem to have taken their present forms during centuries in the pre-Christian era, and are preserved in abundance in Nepal, China, Tibet, and Japan. Compare D. Suzuki, *Oullines of Mahāyāna Buddhism.*

Who in the Buddha refuge take,
They shall not go to woeful doom.
When they put off this human frame
They shall fill up the hosts in heaven.[1]

This idea of extension is elaborated in painting as well as in poetry, and zealous fancy plays a great rôle in broadening the communion of the saints. Buddha occupies, as a matter of course, the central position in the extended community, surrounded by men and gods in the midst of terrestrial beauty and heavenly glories.[2] Beside the celestial deities who descended from the height of the Brahmanic pantheon, there appear the supernal, semi-human beings called *Bodhisattva*, or Beings of Enlightenment, and also various spiritual manifestations of Buddha himself. The *Bodhisattva* are considered in the mythology to be those who are striving for a full realization of the universal communion of Buddhist ideals by taking vows to practice great virtues and to persuade others to the same morality. They are represented in art as beautiful human figures, with bright eyes, rosy cheeks, and long, waving hair. On their heads are golden crowns; their breasts and arms are decorated with garlands; and fine veils float downward from their shoulders. They surround Buddha and add to the glories of the assemblage.

The Greater Vehicle has its metaphysics and moral theories, but these I must leave out of consideration. As a development of beliefs on the lines of poetic imagination, — a further pursuance of the broadening communion and of the aspiration for its realization in various directions, — the *Mahāyāna* was a tremendous force to inspire the artistic sense of the Buddhists and, in return, was largely influenced by that sense. Books setting forth the ideas and faith of this branch of Buddhism are written in flowery style, with high flights of imagination, allegories, similes, parables, visions, and apocalyptic scenes. They are, to leave untouched the metaphysical doctrines preached in them, descriptions in words of the pic-

[1] Rhys Davids, *The Dialogues of the Buddha*, vol. II, pp. 284–85.

[2] This glorification of Buddha in a mythical way is closely connected with the metaphysical conception of his person as identified with the ultimate entity of Truth (*Dharmatā*). This conception may best be compared to the identification of Christ with the Logos in the Johannine Gospel.

PLATE V

Detail from the Wall-Paintings in the Golden Hall of Hōryū-ji

PLATE V

Detail from the Wall-Paintings in the Golden Hall of Hōryū-ji

Japanese, Wadō Period, *circa* A.D. 710

This particular group occupies a position immediately to the left of the figure of Buddha, whose knee and elbow may be seen at the extreme right of the picture. The close similarity of this art to that of the T'ang period in China is very striking. Compare Plate VI.

Painted in colors.

tures representing the glorious assembly of celestial and human beings around Buddha, and they served to stimulate afresh the expression in color and form of the scenes they described. For this reason, pictures representing the vast community of the Buddhist faith in a resplendent combination of figures are called *maṇḍala*, or cycles delineating what is described in the books.

To illustrate painting of this kind, I take first the mural decorations in the Golden Hall of Hōryū-ji [1] (Plate V), dating from the early eighth century. The principal pictures represent the various paradises, the so-called Buddha-lands, in which the respective Buddhas reside as the lords who receive the believers into their realms. The whole scene is full of resplendent colors; the clouds, flowers, celestial beings and human beings illuminated by the rays emitted from Buddha's body. The central figure, the Lord Buddha, is seated in a dignified posture immersed in deep contemplation, or blessing men and inducing them into his communion. The saints standing in front, including deities, *Bodhisattva* and monastic disciples, join their hands in adoration of the Lord. Their faces are full of the expression of piety, and their postures show that they are united in heart with the Lord and with their fellows. The glorious colors are now somewhat faded, but the original conception and composition are splendidly preserved, and the tender expression of lines and curves testifies to the high achievement of the artist.

These representations of the Buddha-lands on the walls of Hōryū-ji illustrate the scenes as they are described in various books; and in order to understand the intention and scheme of similar pictures it is desirable to know the written descriptions, just as it is convenient to refer to the pictures in order to appreciate fully the style of the books. For this purpose I take here the most important of the *Mahāyāna* scriptures, the "Lotus of the Perfect Truth," or *Sad-dharma-puṇḍarīka*.[2] The lotus is a symbol of purity and perfection because it grows out of mud but is not defiled, — just as Buddha is born into the world but lives above the world; and because its fruits are said to be ripe when the flower blooms, — just as

[1] A monastery near Nara, Japan, built A.D. 598–607.

[2] Japanese, *Hokké-kyō*. E. Burnouf's French translation is entitled *Le Lotus de la Bonne Loi*. See also the *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 21.

the truth preached by Buddha bears immediately the fruit of enlightenment. Buddha, according to the Lotus, is Lord of the world, the Father of all beings, the Master of all the enlightened, and his personality is identical with the eternal Truth which manifests itself as the phenomena of the visible universe. He is as well the ultimate source of our existence and of all our thoughts and ideas. This eternal Lord has appeared among men as a human being for the sole purpose of realizing the spiritual lotus of truth in the lives of all sentient beings, and to this end he teaches them and brings them to maturity in accordance with their respective needs and capabilities. Just as one and the same water of rain nourishes innumerable plants and grasses enabling each of them to develop its characteristic features, so the same truth revealed by Buddha makes the lotus flower of every man's spirit bloom and bear the fruits of moral life in the communion of enlightened souls.

In order further to insure the progress of his saving and enlightening work, Buddha manifests a vision of a heavenly shrine in which the eternal Truth is deposited, and summons all his disciples to adore the *stūpa* and to take the vow of allegiance to the Truth. The scene of this apocalyptic vision is peopled also by hosts of innumerable saints who come out of fissures in the earth and sing in unison their adoration of Buddha and of his teachings. They take a solemn oath to observe the Master's precepts and to perpetuate his religion by modelling their lives on those of the saints who care for the spiritual welfare of all. The narrations reach their climax when Buddha reveals the real entity of his eternal life and promises to appear before those who will lead lives of sanctity, and to realize, in the communion of saints, the Kingdom of Buddha on earth. In short this book represents the highest flight of Buddhist idealism and the most eager aspiration for the realization of the all-embracing Sole Road.

It is no wonder that the Lotus of Truth, a grand religious poem in itself, gave great impetus to Buddhist art and poetry. The apparition of the heavenly shrine, the hosts of the sanctified adoring Buddha, the stories of miracles wrought by saints in the name of salvation, — these and other topics were painted ceaselessly in a variety of scenes and compositions.

PLATE VI

The Hokké Maṇḍala

PLATE VI

The Hokké Maṇḍala

Artist unknown

Chinese, Middle Ninth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

An inscription on the back of the painting says: "The chief *maṇḍala* of the Hokké-dō. This *maṇḍala* is a representation of the sacred mountain, and is a real product of India. And whereas the parts below the seat of Śākya had all been destroyed, owing, perhaps, to natural decay, or to mutilation by people (for relics), and the picture having passed through unknown ages in that state, now therefore, in March, the 4th year of Kyūan (1148), we have allowed Chinkei, Ikō-Daihōshi (clerical title), a monk of this temple to repair it. This is because of his skill in painting which he has inherited from his ancestors. We inscribe these particulars in order that posterity may not be misled. Kanshin, Bettō-Honmu (Director of Temple Affairs), Gon-Dai-sōjō (Junior Archbishop)." Kanshin (1084–1153) held office at Tōdai-ji, the temple to which the Hokké-dō belonged.

The picture, an important example of T'ang painting, shows to a marked degree the Indian influence which was predominant in China during the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries, and in this respect may be compared with the paintings more recently found at Tun-huang. It is also a most interesting illustration of the landscape style developed by artists of the T'ang dynasty.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a panel.

PLATE VII

Kwannon as the Merciful All-Mother. By Kano Hōgai

PLATE VII

KWANNON AS THE MERCIFUL ALL-MOTHER

BY KANO HŌGAI (*died* 1888)

JAPANESE, KANO SCHOOL

In the Imperial Art School, Tōkyō

THE deity is shown here as Hibo Kwannon, the Compassionate Mother.

Among the *Bodhisattva* or saints mentioned in this book, the most popular is Kwannon,[1] who is worshipped as the goddess of mercy. Taking the plastic representations of this deity alone, a long history of art may be written. But I must here confine myself to two pictures, one representing the opening scenes of the book and the other Kwannon.

The first one, the *Hokké Maṇḍala* (Plate VI), is an old Chinese painting, probably of the middle ninth century, and represents Buddha immersed in deep contemplation just before he revealed the whole truth of the Lotus (*Hokké*). The scene is the Vulture Peak, one of his favorite resorts;[2] trees grow on the mountain-side, some of them flowering in white or red. The left side of the picture opens in a gorge stretching far into the distance. Buddha, wearing red robes, is seated in the centre in the posture of contemplation, and several saints sit beside him as representatives of the human and celestial beings who adore him. The utmost tranquillity prevails throughout the landscape, and the figures are in dignified composure; but it is implied that marvels are soon to take place and that in the light of the coming revelation the whole scene is to be transfigured into one of resplendent glory. Looking upon this picture we can imagine with what ardor the artist must have painted, and what an amount of piety and enthusiasm his work must have inspired while it hung, during more than a thousand years, on the walls of the Hokké-dō.[3] The picture, even apart from its suggestions and implications, is a great achievement of artistic genius in the grandeur of its composition, the dignity of the figures, and the harmonious combination of colors.

The second example (Plate VII) is a modern Japanese painting, the chief work of the unique genius of Kano Hōgai.[4] The work was finished soon before his death and he had no time to add his signature, as if his life ended when its labor was accomplished. The picture is preserved, together with his numerous preliminary sketches and previous attempts, in the Art

[1] Sanskrit, *Avalokiteśvara;* Chinese, *Kuan Yin.* Concerning this deity, see further chapters III and IV.

[2] Among the followers of the Lotus of Truth, the name Vulture Peak always suggests a paradise, because Buddha declares in the book that the place where he or his faithful disciples live and preach the Truth is the indestructible Land of Treasures.

[3] Of this temple, near the Central Cathedral in Nara, I shall speak in the second chapter.

[4] Died 1888.

School of Tōkyō. His conception was the inexhaustible love of Kwannon, the Mother of All, who is sending her offspring from the realm of light and purity down to the world of sorrows and tribulations. She stands in the midst of golden illumination and resplendent clouds. Her left hand carries a tiny branch of willow, a symbol of meekness, and from the flask held in her right hand falls a drop of water, the water of wisdom, which forms a transparent globe containing a baby. The child looks back in gratitude or in farewell towards the mother above, his lovely hands joined in adoration. The place where the baby is destined to be born is the world of dark clouds among which rugged peaks are seen. The love of the mother, a virgin mother of heavenly dignity, is a pure maternal love, but it exhibits a depth of tragic compassion. She knows the toils her baby is going to encounter in the world below, but she is resolute in sending him there and sure that he will confront heroically the troubles of human life, and carry among mankind the love and wisdom of his mother by emulating the spirit of Buddha's saints.

Whether the heavenly light can penetrate the realm of dark clouds, whether the baby can perform his mission among the rugged precipices and rocks of life, are questions which may arise in the minds of those who look at the picture. But the artist was sure that the miracle is being accomplished even now and by ourselves; for the assurance given by Buddha as to the future of his religion is not vain, if we in our lives follow the love and wisdom of our Mother in Heaven.

II

THE BUDDHIST IDEAL OF COMMUNION IN JAPANESE ART

THE Buddhist gospel of an all-embracing spiritual communion which could be realized in human life, was preached to the East and West, imbuing its converts everywhere with an aspiration for universal communion. Peoples whose mental gaze had reached hardly beyond tribal or national limits were taught that individual life should be regarded as inseparable from communal life, that man's true happiness should be sought, not in the fulfilment of selfish ambitions, but in fellowship with all celestial and terrestrial existences. These teachings, formulated in doctrines, practised in conduct and expressed in art, exercised a great influence also upon the political ideals of nations, by convincing government leaders that the state should be not merely a political organization of might and right, but an institution for the advancement of spiritual harmony and moral edification among the people as a unified body. Let me, however, omit any further account of these developments on the continent of Asia, and pass at once to Japan, where the influence of Buddhist ideals was so conspicuously shown in the close connection between religious faith, state organization and artistic achievement.

It was in 538 A.D.[1] that Buddhism made its official entrance into Japan through a message presented to the Japanese Court by the King of Pekché,[2] a principality of Korea. The message said: "This teaching (*dharma*) is the most excellent of all teachings; it brings endless and immeasurable blessings to all believers, even unto attainment of the Enlightenment (*Bodhi*) without comparison. Moreover, it has come to Korea from far-off India, and the peoples of the countries lying between are now zealous followers of it and none is outside the pale." These words, accompanied by Buddhist scriptures, a fine statue and other exquisite works of art, were, to many, a marvellous revelation, seeming to come as if

[1] The date usually given is 552.

[2] Japanese, *Kudara*.

in response to the necessity for a religion which could give the people some higher ideal than the worship of local gods.

At this time the government was endeavoring to achieve a measure of centralization, and among the leaders of this movement the new religion secured many advocates. But it was not until the end of the century, under the nominal reign of the Empress Suiko, that Buddhism, after years of varying fortune, found in the person of the Prince-Regent Shōtoku — the Holy Virtuous — a thinker and statesman who fully grasped the ideal of spiritual communion. His regency (593–622) marked an epoch in the rise of Japanese civilization. In his "Constitution," issued in 604, he proclaimed, as fundamental principles, that harmony should be the basis of state organization, and that faith in the Three Treasures of the Buddhist religion[1] should be the foundation of national and individual life. Besides effecting these far-reaching political reforms, he established numerous temples which became the centres of learning, artistic activity, music and charity, and in all these undertakings his ambition, as organizer and patron, was to foster the Buddhist ideal of universal communion in daily practice, and thus to realize a true union of state and religion. He himself was a philosopher of keen insight as well as a devout Buddhist of profound piety, and we may be sure that his religious politics were not a mere expedient, nor his artistic taste a mere æstheticism. As a far-sighted statesman he worked for the nation's unity and welfare in both its secular and spiritual aspects, seeking expression for the aim of state organization in the achievements of Buddhist institutions and in the promotion of Buddhist art. Without his guidance Buddhism could never have become so rapidly the vital factor of national life, and without his inspiring patronage Buddhist art could hardly have flourished so successfully among his countrymen. It is, therefore, quite natural that he is, even now, revered as the founder of Buddhism in Japan and also as the patron saint of artists.[2]

The most conspicuous manifestation of the Prince's ideal may be seen

[1] See above, page 5.

[2] In the Art School of Tōkyō there is a shrine dedicated to him, and the artists celebrate every year the anniversary of his death, the twenty-second of February.

in Buddhist architecture. The temple of his time was a composite of many buildings. The principal edifice was the Golden Hall; about it stood a meeting-hall, two meditation halls for summer and winter respectively, a drum-tower, a bell-tower and one or two five-storied pagodas. A long gallery enclosed all these, and in the southern side of the gallery stood prominently a two-storied gateway. This general plan symbolized the communion of saints around the central Buddha, and the effect was imposing.[1] Within the Golden Hall was a platform or dais, about four feet high, representing the cosmos. In the centre of this platform stood a statue of Buddha together with statues of his attendants, and its corners were guarded by the four Guardian Kings, protectors of the religion and its believers. Pillars supported a complicated overhead structure in which were empanelled groups of angels holding various musical instruments in their hands and hovering among clouds. The surrounding walls were frescoed with pictures of Buddha's paradise and of his saints; and the ceiling, painted in various designs, was hung with pendants of silk or of decorated metal plaques intended to suggest the glories of heaven. Worship was performed in front of the central statue, and processions marched around the platform or along the gallery to the accompaniment of music.

These temples, however, were places not only of worship but also of learning, where philosophy and music were taught, and moral discipline was inculcated. Moreover, charitable institutions, such as hospitals, infirmaries, and dispensaries, were attached to them, as means of putting the Buddhist ideal of universal love into actual practice. The whole foundation thus served as a focus of the Buddhist religion, morality and art which now became integral parts of the national life.

Among many temples founded by Prince Shōtoku a few remain in the original edifices, while others, rebuilt after fires, preserve only the original

[1] Professor Edward S. Morse, in his *Japanese Homes and their Surroundings* (New York, 1885), says (p. 46): "There is something truly majestic in the appearance of the broad and massive temples, with the grand upward sweep of their heavily-tiled roofs and deep-shaded eaves, with intricate maze of supports and carvings beneath; the whole sustained on colossal round posts locked and tied together by equally massive timbers." To this remark I may add that in the architecture of the seventh and eighth centuries the combined effect of the group of buildings as described above played a greater part than in any of the following periods.

plans. Of these two classes, Hōryū-ji, near Nara, and Tennō-ji, in Ōsaka, may be taken as respective examples. The former (Plate VIII A) has stood since the beginning of the seventh century. It was built for a college of Buddhist philosophy, and is, in regard to both architecture and contents, the most precious relic of early Buddhist art. The latter, which has passed through alternate periods of decay and renovation, is essentially the same, in design and in the varied uses of its buildings, as the type already described, but the purpose of the foundation is worthy of special notice. Although the temple now stands on a hillside far from the sea, it was originally situated on the water-front of the port leading to the capital of that time. This site was chosen by the Prince, in order that foreign envoys and missionaries might be welcomed, at their landing, through the gateway of Buddhist communion into the sanctuary of worship. We of to-day, familiar with the bustle of a modern customs service, may at least try to imagine how these travellers of long ago, after their tedious sea journey, stepped into the Land of Sunrise, and, accompanied by processions and music, were ushered into the group of beautiful edifices. Surely this foundation alone amply testifies to the high ideals of the Prince and to the grandeur of his achievement.

The seventh century was a period of rapid advance in Japanese civilization. National unity resulted in the establishment of a firm Imperial *régime*, and Buddhism manifested its vigor in moral, social and artistic activities. This progress culminated in the glory of the era of Tempyō (729–749), or Heavenly Peace, in which the ideal of a true union between Church and State reached its mature expression; and art, especially architecture and sculpture, became more a manifestation of national impulse than a product of individual initiative. Buddhism worked for the benefit of the state, for the security of the Throne, for the weal of the people; and the state, in turn, was dedicated to the Buddhist cause, that is, to a realization of the ideal communion in and through the actual life of the nation. Government, court nobles and people alike contributed to the religion and its art. Each household had its family sanctuary, every province built its

PLATE VIII (A & B)

(A) The Golden Hall, Gateway, and Pagoda of Hōryū-ji

(B) West Front of the Hokké-dō of Tōdai-ji, Nara

PLATE VIII (A & B)

A. The Golden Hall, Gateway and Pagoda of Hōryū-ji Seen from the Meeting Hall, looking South

The temple is known to have been founded early in the seventh century, 606–613, but there is still some disagreement as to whether the present buildings date from that time or are reconstructions erected after a fire which occurred in 670. Most architects believe the existing structures to be the originals, though the four carved pillars supporting the upper roof of the Golden Hall were added in the seventeenth century, and the shed roofs protecting the lower parts of the Golden Hall and of the Pagoda are also later additions.

B. West Front of the Hokké-dō of Tōdai-ji, Nara

Founded as the Konshō-ji in 733, but later (*circa* 752) absorbed by the great monastery of Tōdai-ji, and thereafter known as the Hokké-dō. The present asymmetry of the roof is due to the addition of the hall of devotion in the Kamakura period, and the whole edifice has been recently repaired.

A

B

PLATE IX (A & B)

Two of the Four Guardian Kings

PLATE IX (A & B)

Two of the Four Guardian Kings

Japanese, Eighth Century

In the Kaidan-in of Tōdai-ji, Nara

A. Kōmoku-ten (Sanskrit, *Virūpakṣa*), the Far-Gazer, Guardian of the West.

B. Zōchō-ten (Sanskrit, *Virūḍhaka*), the Lord of Growth, Guardian of the South.

The other two Guardian Kings are: Jikoku-ten (Sanskrit, *Dhṛtarāṣṭra*), the Land-Bearer, Guardian of the East, and Tamon-ten (Sanskrit, *Vaiśravaṇa*), the Well-Famed, Guardian of the North.

A

B

own Cathedral, and in the capital, at Nara, a Central Cathedral was erected (743–752), the consummate expression of the splendor of Tempyō.

This Cathedral, known as Tōdai-ji, was dedicated to the Buddha Vairochana,[1] or "Illuminator," whose colossal bronze statue occupies the central position. Originally there were two seven-storied pagodas in front of the main building, which was further surrounded by many smaller temples and shrines, dedicated to various saints and each containing a cosmic platform adorned with numerous statues massed around a central figure. Fortunately one of these minor edifices, the Hokké-dō (Plate VIII B), in which the *Hokké Maṇḍala* of this Museum was deposited, stands almost intact; and another, the Kaidan-in, or sanctuary for initiation into Buddhist mystery, is preserved in its original plan. The group of these larger and smaller buildings, situated on the gentle slope of the Kasuga hills and surrounded by giant trees, exhibits a synthetic beauty of art and nature designed to embody the glory of the Kingdom of Buddha, and at the same time to symbolize the monarchic constitution of the state supported by unity of religious faith and moral ideals.

Thus the sculpture and architecture of Tempyō, neither of which has ever been excelled in grandeur and perfection by later ages, were integral parts of Buddhism; but it is in sculpture — in the expression of individuality and in the composition of groups — that the power of Buddhist inspiration is most clearly shown. The group in Buddhist sculpture is not, however, an inseparable composition as in Greek art, but simply an array of single statues enclosed within the railings of the cosmic platform, the whole representing an assembly of the saints around the Universal Lord. Various qualities and attributes are manifest in the dignified postures and vivid expressions of the individual figures, while their joint adoration of Buddha is brought out by the grouping; and to this must be added the imposing magnitude of the statues, of which the smallest is not less than life-size. Here, in the sculpture of Tempyō, we discern the final result of the union of Buddhist ideals with Greek genius; and here, too, the tangible

[1] So called in Sanskrit; in Japanese, *Birushana* or *Rushana*.

embodiment of Buddhist teachings attained its perfection in the happiest harmony of idealistic conception and realistic execution.

The great bronze Buddha of Tōdai-ji is over sixty feet high including the lotus pedestal. Its head and right shoulder were destroyed in repeated fires and replaced by rather poor substitutes, but in the lower part of the body and especially in the lotus pedestal we can see the beauty and grandeur of the original. Buddha is seated in the dignified posture in which he preaches the cosmic truths ceaselessly and eternally. Behind him rises an aureola of overlapping double circles composed of resplendent flames in which numerous apparitions of Buddhahood are seen, and beneath him is a gigantic lotus seat symbolizing the cosmos. The petals of this huge flower represent various countries, and on each of them are engraved figures of saints and angels who have come together there to adore the Buddha, Lord of the Universe, and to propagate the truth among people of all lands and times. Their attitudes, robes, crowns and emblems indicate their respective virtues as well as the various missions they are destined to fulfil for the sake of men. In short, the whole statue, like the temple of which it forms the central feature, is a representation of the cosmic spirit and a visible embodiment of the communion of all beings enlightened by Buddha's wisdom.

More realistic and more specialized in motive are the life-size figures of the four Guardian Kings which stand at the corners of the cosmic platform in the Kaidan-in, or Hall of Initiation. The two reproduced in Plate IX (A & B) may, perhaps, sufficiently illustrate the characteristic qualities of these four statues, whose expressions are similar though their postures differ. They stand — each on the prostrate body of an evil demon — alert and ready to ward off all vices and wickedness which might threaten the men of faith and the countries where righteousness prevails. One grasps a sword; another a spear; another upholds a shrine, the repository of truth; and in the powerful muscular tension of face, body and limbs, the invincible will and tireless energy of each are vigorously portrayed.

Quite different in feeling are two heroic statues which stand beside the central Buddha on the cosmic platform of the Hokké-dō, a chapel dedicated

to the propagation of the True Law. These figures represent two celestial lords, Indra, ruler of kings and warriors, and Brahmā, king of the heavenly hosts, the highest deities of the Hindu pantheon, who are said to have come down from their abodes in heaven and paid homage to Buddha by participating in the assembly of his followers. One of them, Brahmā,[1] is reproduced in Plate X, and the point to be noted is the realistic execution of the sculpture. It is ruled by no convention. The figure is simply a human being of perfect proportions, wearing robes and a headdress such as might have been worn by the nobility of India or China; yet the dignified presence and the noble face are evidence enough that the man here represented must be a heavenly or kingly person. His gesture is a simple joining of hands; yet no one can mistake the intention of that gesture or fail to see the devotion of heart expressed in his attitude. Here a god is made man; and this was not a mere flight of imagination but a typical representation of the faith of that time. Indeed these two statues were made after the model — in spirit, though not in form — of the Emperor Shōmu who erected the Central Cathedral. The Sovereign of that time, who was believed to be almost a divine being, paid homage to the personal representative of the cosmic truth, and this was the inspiration from which the artist[2] derived his conception of the statues.

In the year 749, on the occasion of a thanksgiving, the Emperor, Empress-consort and Crown Princess, attended by hundreds and thousands of the court nobles, ladies, retainers and priests, proceeded from the palace to the Central Cathedral, where services were held, and the Sovereign bowed before the Great Buddha, declaring himself to be the servant of the Three Treasures. This was, perhaps, the most magnificent religious observance which has ever taken place in Japan,[3] and it is easy to imagine what a solemn grandeur of ceremony must have been possible in the presence of these statues, amid the elaborate surroundings of a gigantic

[1] Japanese, *Bonten.*

[2] Probably the Abbot Rōben, Advisor to the Emperor.

[3] What remains of the apparatus and instruments used on that occasion is preserved at Nara in the Imperial Magazine, called Shōsō-in, close to the Cathedral. Among the treasures stored there is a marble relief in Byzantine style and a picture of a lady in old Persian robes, showing the contact of Japan with the world through Buddhism. All of the treasures are reproduced and described in *Toyei-shukō*, Tōkyō, 1908.

temple; for Buddhist rituals are gorgeous with candlelight, incense, flowers, music, processions and litanies, all artistically combined. But, in any case, the full significance of Buddhist art cannot be appreciated apart from the rituals. A statue, however beautiful in itself, if seated desolate, or crowded among others in a museum, is only a *caput mortuum* of an organic body;[1] and a temple thrown open to the curiosity of visitors is but a deserted house devoid of life. The real beauty of a Gothic cathedral cannot be entirely dissociated from incense, lights and church music; nor is it otherwise with Buddhist architecture and sculpture. They help to complete a synthesis of beauty corresponding to the ideal of universal communion.

Now, leaving the eighth century and the glory of Tempyō art, let us pass over the next two hundred years and take up another manifestation of the ideal of communion which first appeared in Japan during the tenth century. Union of state and religion and the manifestation thereof in art had, meanwhile, continued to develop, although in the ninth century a new turn was given by the importation from China of the *Shingon* sect of Buddhism, with which I shall deal in the next chapter. The tenth century was a period in which the corruption of the priesthood began to evince itself, but beneath such developments at the surface there was streaming already an undercurrent of faith in Amita,[2] the Buddha of Infinite Life and Light, whose story is told in one of the *Mahāyāna* books, — the *Sukhāvati-vyūhā*, or "Description of the Land of Bliss." This Buddha is believed to have taken a vow to save all beings and to prepare for them, far in the West, a paradise, realized by him through long training and the accumulation of innumerable merits, whither any one who believes in his mercy and invokes his name shall be taken, even from this life, — there to participate in the communion of the Saints. This new phase in the development of Buddhist faith was a religion of personal devotion and

[1] The architectural design and the grouping of statues in Gallery no. 5 of the Department of Chinese and Japanese Art are intended to lessen the inherent defects of Museum exhibition.

[2] So in Sanskrit, the full name being *Amitābha*, "Infinite Light," or *Amitāyus*, "Infinite Life." In Japan the name is commonly pronounced *Amida*.

PLATE X

Brahmā, King of the Heavenly Hosts

PLATE X

Brahmā, King of the Heavenly Hosts
Japanese, Eighth Century
In the Hokké-dō of Tōdai-ji, Nara

Dry lacquer sculpture.

salvation by mercy, and was cherished by pious monks in the course of the tenth century. Toward the end of the eleventh century it had come to the front, and its full rise may be dated in the second half of the twelfth century, since which time it has continued to be the most influential factor of Japanese Buddhism.

Belief in a merciful Deity and his paradise has always acted as a powerful incentive to artistic expression. Thus the Buddha Amita, of illumined body, sitting with his saints in the midst of celestial trees and flowers, or appearing in visions to the pious, or coming, attended by the heavenly hosts, to receive the dying; and the bliss of those who were reborn in his realms and now adore the merciful Lord from their seats in the resplendent lotus flowers,[1] — these scenes furnished splendid materials to the activity of artists. Here the conception of spiritual communion was not essentially different from that of former ages, but the personal appearance of Buddha and concrete descriptions of his paradise became more commonly the themes of painting, with freer composition and more variegated coloring. It is also to be noticed that the Japanese genius worked, in these pictures, to soften the curves, to refine the colors, and to make the facial expression of the figures more human and tender.

The most precious specimens of this category are the mural decorations in the Phœnix Hall of Byōdō-in near Kyōto, and two triptychs sometimes attributed to Eshin.[2] The Phœnix Hall, a chapel of a nobleman, was finished in 1053, and the paintings on the walls and door-wings were executed by Tamenari, a master of the Takuma school. One of them represents Amita Buddha seated amid the saints and glories of his paradise. Illumining rays emanate from his eyes and extend downward to a building which is, perhaps, meant to be the palace of the noble who dedicated the chapel to the Buddha Amita. Unfortunately the painting is much defaced, but it still retains something of its original splendor of color and composition.

The two triptychs are said to be the work of Eshin, a learned and pious monk, who described in a book the miseries of inferior births and the glories of the Land of Bliss. In the verbal delineation of those visionary

[1] For these descriptions, see the *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. 49, part ii, pp. 91–98.

[2] Genshin, better known as Eshin or the Abbot of Eshin monastery ((942–1017).

scenes his talent may be compared with that of Dante; but he was, in addition, a great master of painting, so rich in colors, quiet in tone, free in composition and soaring in conception, that he may be called the Fra Angelico of Japan. One of these works here reproduced (Plate XI) shows the Buddha Amita coming to receive a believer. The dignity of the central figure, the variety in posture of the saints playing on musical instruments, the softness of the variegated clouds, and the charming glimpse of a landscape below, display most inspiringly his artistic genius and religious fervor. The other Amita picture (Plate I, Frontispiece) represents Buddha accompanied by two attendant *Bodhisattva*,[1] appearing over a hill range. The contrast between the golden radiance of the three heavenly persons and the fresh green of hills and trees; the harmony of the divine composure with the serenity of nature, suggestive of the mercy of Buddha pervading the light of a tranquil morning, — these are expressions of the monk's inspired vision. A hymn of the same century sings: —

> Ah! pity 't is, we cannot see the Buddha face to face,
> Though He is present always, everywhere.
> And yet, perchance, as in a vision, He will come to us
> In the calm morning hour, when no man stirs.

Such visions Eshin was the first to paint, and he did it with the breadth and dexterity of a master.

Throughout the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries this gentle and beautiful art kept pace with the spread of Amita worship. Vigor gave place to meekness, sweet harmony became more conspicuous than virile inspiration, and the artists worked in ecstasies of tender piety and self-forgetting devotion. The results are seen in the majestic serenity of the Great Buddha of Kamakura (Plate XII), in the charming statues of Amita and his attendants (Plate XIII), and in many delicate pictures in this Museum.

Another, but contemporary, manifestation of this faith is apparent in the long scroll-paintings which are so closely connected with the *genre*

[1] Kwannon (Sanskrit, *Avalokiteśvara*) and Seishi (Sanskrit, *Mahā-Sthānaprāpta*).

PLATE XI

Amita Buddha and Twenty-five Bodhisattva. By Eshin Sōzu Genshin

PLATE XI

AMITA BUDDHA AND TWENTY-FIVE BODHISATTVA

BY ESHIN SŌZU GENSHIN

JAPANESE, 942–1017

Owned by Kōyasan Monastery,
and now deposited in the Imperial Museum, Tōkyō

THE BUDDHA and his attendants are shown welcoming the souls of the faithful to Paradise.

PLATE XII

The Great Amita Buddha at Kamakura

PLATE XII

THE GREAT AMITA BUDDHA AT KAMAKURA
JAPANESE, MIDDLE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

Bronze casting.

PLATE XIII

The Amita Triad

PLATE XIII

The Amita Triad

Japanese, Early Fourteenth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

This group of wood sculpture did not originally belong together, though its members are all of the late Kamakura period. The central figure, Amita Buddha in the attitude of blessing, is delicately overlaid with gold, and shows, in its well-proportioned body and in the soft curves of its dress, the workmanship characteristic of the time. Kwannon, on the right, representing the mercy of Amita, is shown in the attitude of welcoming the pious souls to Paradise; while Seishi, on the left, representing the power of Amita's wisdom, pays homage to the true believers. These two figures may be taken as examples of a late development of the Unkei school.

painting of the period. The touches of landscape in Eshin's pictures and the scenes[1] of transmigration described in his writings, were significant. The changes in Buddhist art begun by the pious monk heralded a gradual deviation from the iconographic rules exemplified in Buddhist figures brought over from Asia,[2] and this process was accelerated by the combined influence of the nature-mysticism associated with Amita-Buddhism and the pictorial representation of various events associated with the life histories of religious leaders. The result was a religiously inspired *genre* painting which became a prominent factor of Japanese Buddhist art in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Scenes such as the appearance of the Buddha Amita before some pious man, the falling of heavenly flowers on the occasion of a virtuous monk's sermon, or a pathetic conversion among the court ladies, were represented; and side by side with the bliss of paradise, the miseries of the doomed or of ghostly existences were depicted. In paintings of this kind the activities of human life, together with their backgrounds of houses and gardens, hills and trees, were regarded simply as one aspect of the whole realm of transmigration, — a stage in spiritual communion, a scene of the manifestation of Buddha's mercy.

This brief description may serve to show in what sense Eshin was the pioneer of both the religion and the art of the thirteenth century. But a great distinction between his work and its subsequent development consists in the later practice of using long, horizontal scrolls, on which the scenes were delineated in series. This is only a difference in technique, but it had a wide bearing in modifying the use of the pictures. A painting of Buddha and his saints, whether on a vertical, hanging scroll[3] or on a panel, was intended primarily for more or less general worship; while the pictures executed on horizontal scrolls[4] served better the ends of privacy and narration. This does not mean that the altar piece gave way entirely to the long scroll, nor that the *genre* painters worked with less piety than

[1] Actually depicted in paintings attributed to Kosé no Hirotaka, a contemporary of Eshin. The pictures are in Raikō-ji, near Ōtsu.

[2] See chapter III.

[3] Japanese, *kakemono*.

[4] Japanese, *makimono*. Perhaps an intermediate stage in the transition from *kakemono* to *makimono* is represented by the pictures of the resorts of transmigration, attributed to Hirotaka. They are in the form of *kakemono*, but the scenes are arranged in horizontal registers.

the painters of altar pieces. In many cases one and the same artist worked on both kinds of painting and the illustrations of the saints' lives were respected almost to the point of worship. Yet this change in treatment was destined to promote the infiltration of secular motives and the mediæval religious *genre* became the forerunner of the modern *genre* of totally profane intention. After all, the freedom of composition, the softly graded color range and the diversity of scenes which characterize the rise of the Buddhist *genre*, were all concomitant with the popularization of religious teachings in the thirteenth century and after.

Viewed by such light as I have been able to shed on the subject, it is clear that the beauty of Buddhist art was, for the most part, founded on the ideal of spiritual communion, whether in this world or in a heavenly realm. This ideal it was that gave to Buddhism the power of expansion beyond the boundaries of nations, fired its adherents with missionary zeal, and inspired the imagination of its artists and poets. One who can appreciate this ideal will understand Buddhist art, and will discover in the hearts of the Japanese a tone of tenderness and a depth of sympathy which are the essential conditions of artistic creation and enjoyment.

III

BUDDHIST COSMOTHEISM AND THE SYMBOLISM OF ITS ART

HAVING seen how the Buddhist ideal of communion developed in various special directions and gave rise to corresponding manifestations in art, let us now turn back to the ninth century and examine a form of Buddhism which found expression in an extremely comprehensive and striking combination of spiritual ideals and material embodiment, of speculative thought and mystic ritual, and in a union of the Buddhist, Hindu, Persian, Chinese and Japanese pantheons into one cycle centred in Buddha. The Japanese name of this Buddhism is *Shingon*,[1] or the True Word, and it may be designated as a synthetic or symbolic Buddhism. It views the universe as a cosmotheism, or, more explicitly, it defines the total cosmos as Divinity, whereof particular features may, for certain purposes, be assembled under the forms of separate deities; and its art was an attempt to represent these innumerable deities, saints, demons, angels and other ultra-human beings embodying the inexhaustible beauties, powers, activities and mysteries, by means of pictures, statues, symbols and rites. In entering upon this subject we must — as if about to traverse a lofty mountain pass — be prepared to go among mists and clouds, to encounter ravines and glaciers; we shall meet superb figures and beautiful scenery, but also awe-inspiring sights and forms which excite terror.

The ideal of spiritual communion extended, as I have already indicated, not only to the celestial and animal existences but even further to the demoniac and non-sentient beings, and was destined to culminate in a world-view, according to which the universe is comprised in the Buddhist communion and constitutes the real entity of Buddhahood. Buddha is the perfect person who attained the life of all-embracing wisdom and love, thus identifying himself with the cosmos and all the lives in it. The final substratum of Buddhahood is, therefore, the cosmos, including its spiritual

[1] Sanskrit, *Mantra*; Chinese, *Chên-yen*.

and material aspects, and Buddha is the Lord who rules it, not from above, but from within. His spirit is the cosmic soul which, like a seed, evolves out of itself all the phenomena of the universe. The cosmic life thus regarded as the enactment of the infinite communion ruled by Buddha, the Cosmic Soul, may be and must be grasped and experienced by the soul which lives the life not of an individual but of the whole communion; and this soul, when it transcends the limit of selfish narrowness and individuality, can include all existences within its domain, and discover in itself the germs of all phenomena. This means also an expansion of individual life to the compass of the universe, by living in communion and participation with the cosmic life. The absorption of self into the world amounts to an identification of the microcosmos with the macrocosmos.

This belief, formulated in general terms, is the fundamental ideal common to nearly all branches of Buddhism; and though Japanese Buddhism of the eighth century laid special emphasis on the union of the religious ideal with state organization, it was at bottom a cosmotheism and idealism of the same sort. The distinguishing feature of *Shingon* Buddhism was its embodiment of this cosmotheism in concrete forms and tangible manifestations. Sweeping over Central Asia and China, and later reaching Japan at the beginning of the ninth century, it succeeded in absorbing the pantheons of these different peoples into its cosmotheistic domain and in uniting them with the central conception of a cosmic Lord, the Great Illuminator (Sanskrit, *Mahā-Vairochana;* Japanese, *Dai-nichi*), a former title of Buddha which was now specified as a distinct personality.

According to the tenets of this school, Buddha, the Cosmic Lord, is not a mere spirit. His body is the whole of material existence, and even a grain of dust partakes of his spiritual life and owes its existence to him. The world is a living organism, manifesting its life everywhere and endeavoring to attain full self-consciousness in every particle, — a view which Gustav Theodor Fechner taught in his "Zend-Avesta," one thousand years later. Moreover, just as we men live and act by the functions of thought, speech, and bodily motion, so the world and its components are living by these threefold activities. To use modern phrases, the energy of the cosmos is

the world's thought, every sound is its speech, and every movement its bodily action. These activities are not merely external motions of the material world, but are growths out of a deeper foundation of life and are controlled by spiritual forces. Such inner meanings of the world's life can be comprehended by us and realized in our personal lives, when we identify ourselves with the cosmos. They are mysteries to the ordinary mind, but realities to those who have mastered the secrets and worked them out in life.

How, then, can we realize these mysteries and thus commune with the cosmic life? Here the *Shingon* Buddhism offers us very recondite but practical ideas and observances. The world is composed of the various groups of spiritual forces expressing themselves in the forms and behavior of material phenomena, each of which, according to *Shingon* teaching, may be regarded as a deity, with his or her special attributes, functions and intentions. The number of these deities, like the particles of the universe, can never be exhausted; nevertheless they do not constitute a mere aggregate, but are grouped in a definite system of classes and finally united in the cosmic person or spirit of the Great Illuminator. Thus the *Shingon* cosmotheism is most keen in emphasizing both the diversity of qualities and powers, and their unity in the all-embracing Lord.

Viewed in this way, the beings and things of the world exist in order to realize their participation in the omnipresent activities of the Lord, and to live, think and express themselves as He does. We human beings, furnished with body and mind, are a concrete manifestation of the whole cosmic structure, and are destined to represent the cosmic life in personal life; but being shrouded in illusion and selfishness we have lost sight of the inner tie which unites us with the Great Illuminator, and of our real communion with other beings. It is, therefore, the purpose of Buddha in his innumerable manifestations as various deities and phenomena, to enlighten us in regard to our original kinship with him and in our destiny to restore it, so that we may achieve a full participation in the cosmic life.

The special tenet of *Shingon* consists in showing us these educative activities of Buddha in concrete representations of his virtues and powers.

This is done by visualizing in pictures, statues and rites the symbolic or anthropomorphic manifestations of Buddha and of the various deities which are his emanations. The Great Illuminator, for instance, is sometimes represented as a golden Buddha sitting on a red or variegated lotus flower, his hands folded in the posture of profound contemplation; again, he appears as a Buddha perfectly white in body sitting on a white lotus and expressing in his joined hands his intention of revealing truths (Plate XIV). He is shown also in a formidable aspect sitting or standing, his whole person expressive of resentment and indignation. In this guise he is called the Immobile (Sanskrit, *Achala;* Japanese, *Fudō*), and his fierce eyes glare at every evil thought or base passion, while the sword and rope he holds signify his readiness to menace and restrain every sinful act (Plate XV). His powers may also be visualized by associating with his figure a number of other deities, each of whom embodies a certain attribute or intention of the Buddha. When, for example, he is surrounded by four other Buddhas, the arrangement is meant to signify that he is the kernel and fountain-head of indefatigable determination, inexhaustible blessings, spiritual enlightenment and endless adaptability, respectively represented by the persons of the surrounding four.[1] And again each of these four may be represented in various forms and accompanied by subordinate figures which convey their respective functions.

The characteristics of these deities are represented chiefly by facial expression and bodily posture. But no less important rôles are assigned to details of attire, such as the forms of crowns, the colors of lotus pedestals, the shapes and decorations of halos, or the emblems held in the hands, — all of which are intended to symbolize virtues and powers and to embody certain aspects of the cosmic activities. For instance, when the left hand is laid palm upward on the knees, the right hand laid in the same way upon the left, and the thumbs joined at the tips, the combination is meant to express a fusion in contemplation of the five material elements symbolized by the fingers. Or, when the fingers of the right hand clasp the fore-finger of the left according to a prescribed configuration, the gesture symbol-

[1] See further the explanation accompanying Plate XVI A.

PLATE XIV

Dai-nichi, the Great Illuminator

PLATE XIV

Dai-nichi, the Great Illuminator

Artist unknown

Japanese, Thirteenth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

In this work of the middle Kamakura period the deity appears as Ichiji-kinrin, a supreme manifestation of Dai-nichi shown in the upper middle square of the Diamond Cycle, as indicated by the characteristic aureola and the whitish tone on both aureola and figure.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a *kakemono.*

PLATE XV

Fudō and his Attendants

PLATE XV

Fudō and his Attendants

Artist unknown

Japanese, Kamakura Period, Thirteenth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

A fierce manifestation of Mahā-Vairochana (*see p. 32*), holding a sword and a rope in his hands and surrounded by flames. He is accompanied by two attendants, the boyish Konkara (Sanskrit, *Kinkara*) and the elderly Seitaka (Sanskrit, *Caitaka?*), representing respectively the sustaining virtue and the subjugating power of Fudō. The dragon on the left of the picture is called Kurikara (Sanskrit, *Kaurikāra?*), and is believed to represent either the subjugating power of Fudō, or the human passions which are to be subjugated by the symbolic sword round which the dragon is coiled.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a *kakemono.*

izes the unity of the cosmic and the individual souls in the final spiritual enlightenment.[1] Carried in the hands are flowers, jewels, weapons, staffs and other symbols, in almost endless variety, with which definite significations are associated, and these expressions, postures and emblems may thus be varied so as to harmonize with the different aspects which one and the same deity assumes according to intentions and circumstances.

To know all these signs and their symbolic meanings is a hard task, and we, the uninitiated, must remain satisfied with being told that the possible deities and symbols are as many as the atoms of the universe. What we can observe for ourselves, however, is the bearing of this mystic symbolization upon painting and sculpture. When it is considered that these intricate suggestions cannot be adequately represented save by pictures or statues, and that even a slight variation in form or attitude may cause a great difference in significance or annul ceremonial efficacy, as is taught by *Shingon*, it is easy to imagine how scrupulously the painters and sculptors must have worked. Moreover, these representations were not mere diagrams, but portrayals of various emotions, intentions, powers and virtues by means of the corresponding personal appearance of the deities represented. This requirement of *Shingon* art acted, necessarily, as a strong incentive to exact differentiation among the individual figures. When the Great Illuminator is represented in contemplation, the symbolic crown, the mode of joining the hands, the facial expression, and the whole bodily attitude must indicate that he is realizing in his mind the truth of the continuity of existence. When he appears as a furious conqueror of passions, his whole appearance must be a visualization of a formidable, all-subjugating power. Thus, although the art of *Shingon* was largely controlled by its symbolic conventions, and although some of its figures are ultra-human or even repellent, its meticulous care in the matter of symbolic details was combined with an eager effort for the realistic execution of human expressions in face, body and limbs. This was carried out with the object of making visible what is abstract, by expressing in tangible manifestations the supernal powers of the deities, and thus furnishing not only the *raison*

[1] For the symbolism of these and other gestures, see: *Si-do-in-dzou, gestes de l'officiant dans les cérémonies mystiques des sectes Tendai et Shingon.* (*Annales du Musée Guimet*, vol. VIII.)

d'être of *Shingon* art, but also the strongest motives for delicate painting and vigorous sculpture, the results of which are seen chiefly in the art of the Heian period, from the ninth to the twelfth century.

To describe in detail any considerable number of these symbolic characteristics displayed in *Shingon* pictures and statues, would take too long. Moreover, it is possible in this Museum to study the works of art themselves and discover what these figures and emblems are meant to convey. Such study will, I hope, reveal various kinds of beauty, serenity, fullness, vitality, fury, and an expression of power even in monstrosity; for the art of *Shingon* is rich in grace, in sublimity, and also in what is called the beauty of ugliness. But another point to which I would call especial attention is a peculiar method or mood in delineation which may be called expression in suppression.

A bodily expression is usually understood to be the natural way of moving the muscles of the face or other parts of the body, in response to the impulses of thought or feeling. We weep when we are sorry, we laugh or smile when we are amused, or we lift up our arms in crying to Heaven. These are natural expressions which are surely common to the majority of mankind, and, indeed, it is not my intention to deny the naturalness of any bodily expressions, but merely to emphasize the fact that some of them are matters of usage, and that a given emotion may be expressed in more than one way. Some people worship by joining the fingers, others by bringing together the palms of the hands, and others by crossing the arms upon the breast. You of the West greet by shaking hands, the ancient Chinese joined his own hands and raised them, we Japanese bow down the head. These are expressions under the control of usage. On the other hand many people would, in certain cases, smile to express anger, — what is called by us the bitter smile; and some, instead of weeping, would sit in silence. These I call expressions in suppression.

Doubtless the foregoing is enough to indicate on what considerations the figures depicted in *Shingon* art are based. Many of them show expressions common to every one; others conform to the usage of Asiatic peoples, and some others exemplify the more special mode of expression in suppression.

This last is best seen in the figure of Fudō, a furious manifestation of the Great Illuminator, to whom allusion has already been made. His name means immobile or immovable, and he sits or stands, firm and motionless, surrounded by leaping flames. His arms are bent toward his body; his hands grasp tightly a sword and a rope; there is no attempt to suggest action; and yet the whole posture is expressive of the utmost energy. Another instance may be seen in the profound contemplation of the Great Illuminator. His whole body is in a perfect equipoise; his hands rest on his knees, his head is inclined a little forward, and his face is calm "like the moon." There is no expression in the active sense, yet the figure tells of a fullness of wisdom which can be poured out without end. It is an infinite eloquence in silence.[1] Nevertheless, the paradox implied in such a phrase is not real, inasmuch as the Buddhists have always trained themselves to reserve emotion and to restrain expression within the bounds of potentiality.

In this connection let me say a few words about the position of arms and hands, and its influence upon mental states. An eminent psychologist has said that a man does not weep because he is sad but is sad because he weeps; and though this cannot be a whole truth, it is an interesting remark in its bearing on the relation of bodily posture to mental conditions, which, in turn, is one way of explaining the significance of the various attitudes of body, arms and hands associated with deities who are presented in accordance with the *Shingon* iconography. If the body, whether standing or sitting, be held erect, the palms joined before the breast, and the position calmly maintained; or if one hand be grasped by the other, as in the figure of the Great Illuminator, and the respiration be quietly controlled; or if all the muscles of the body be contracted, and the formidable facial expression of the Immobile Deity be assumed; — then, by imitating these and other postures in conformity with the rules of *Shingon*, it will become possible gradually to acquire the mental atmosphere, the powers and the virtues associated with these deities. This point is emphasized in order to show that the various attitudes ascribed to the deities and represented in

[1] Another instance of this will be discussed in the fourth chapter.

painting and sculpture are not mere arbitrary conventions, but realistic embodiments of the postures which were assumed by the Buddhists in the course of their mental training. Surely there is much of symbolism and conventionality in the art of *Shingon*, but it must also be recognized that these pictures and statues, in spite of a strange or even repellent aspect in some cases, are expressing human sentiments and volitions in human ways. From this point of view it may be said that the *Shingon* art is a significant achievement of genius fostered by a religion of systematic mysticism, expressed in association with various methods of mental training and based upon the ideas and ideals of a vast cosmotheistic system.

In so far as explanations of the individual deities and their attributes may facilitate the understanding of this singular combination of beliefs and art-expressions, the foregoing must, for the present, suffice. Let me, therefore, take up the general scheme of the cosmotheistic world-view as expressed in painting. The realization of a universal spiritual communion is the fundamental ideal of the Buddhist religion; and the embodiment of this ideal in a group of statues arranged on a platform and enclosed by railings, has been already described. But the importance of this plastic representation of the cosmic communion grew apace with the growth of artistic skill and the multiplication of mystic ideas. Even the cosmic scheme of the great *Shingon* communion was often exhibited in this way. Nevertheless, the attempt to unify all possible varieties of saints, deities, spirits and demons with the central world-soul, Buddha, was too comprehensive a plan to be adequately and conveniently expressed except by painting.[1] This circumstance gave rise to the ingenious but curious expedient of projecting the whole scheme on a plane surface and arranging the figures side by side according to classes within squares and circles. The result was a composite picture in which the figures were grouped as if the statues themselves had been laid down on a platform and looked at from above. The complete cycle of these groups is called a *maṇḍala* or assemblage, and is used to represent graphically the cosmotheistic world-view

[1] Attempts were, however, made to present these groups of figures in carved reliefs which show the transition of the *Shingon maṇḍala* from sculpture to painting.

PLATE XVI (A & B)

Shuji Maṇḍala

PLATE XVI (A & B)

Shuji Maṇḍala

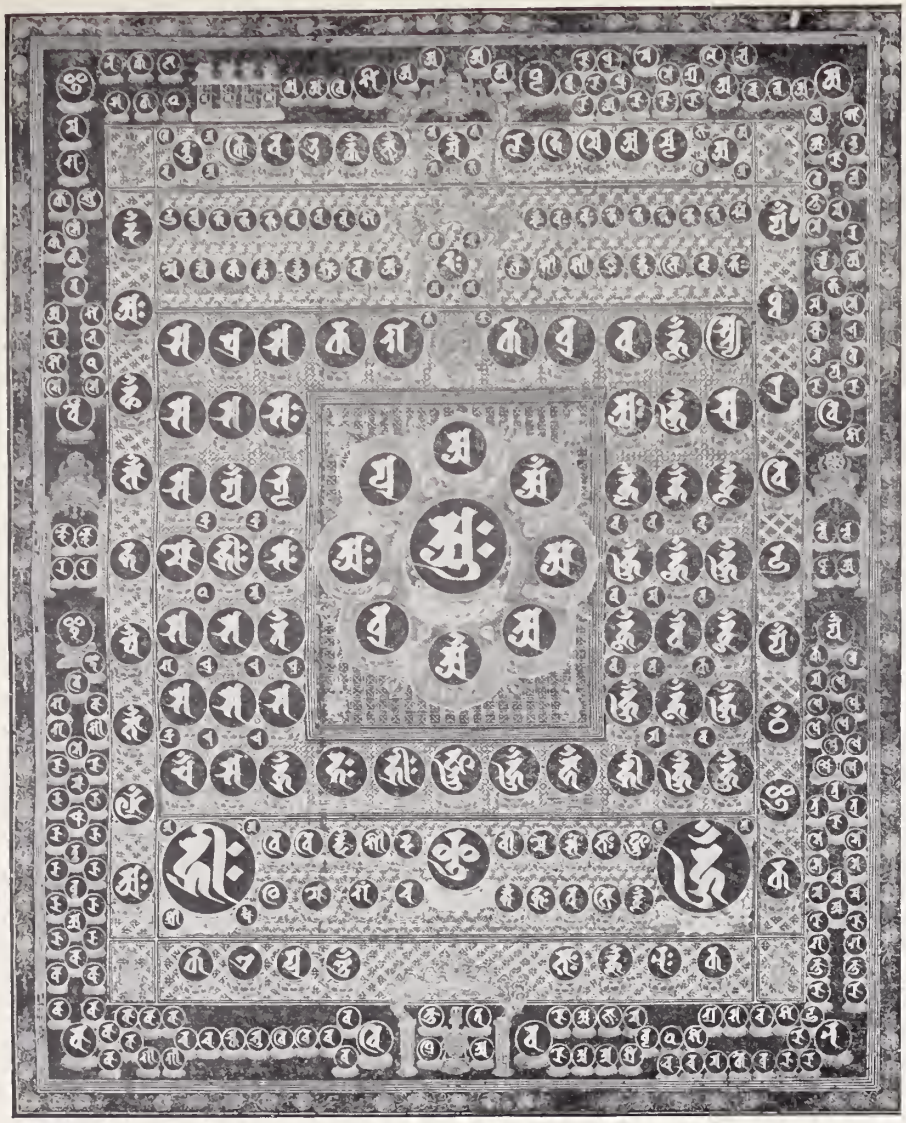
A. The Diamond Cycle. B. The Womb-Store Cycle.

Japanese, Late Seventeenth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Diagrammatic representations in which Sanskrit letters are substituted for figures of the deities in the two Cycles. These letters, called *Shuji* (Sanskrit, *Bīja*) or seed, are regarded as efficacious symbols of the *Shingon* Buddhist deities, their application to this symbolism being based on the philosophy of language started, probably, in the second century B.C., by Patañjali. The letters have, in most cases, nothing to do with the names of the deities, and their use arose merely from the association of the virtue of a certain deity with the power believed to be expressed by a certain letter. The Great Illuminator, for instance, is represented in the Womb Cycle by the letter *A*, which is the source of all letters, while the same Buddha is symbolized in the Diamond Cycle by the letter *VAM*, the consummation of all letters.

Painted in gold on dark brown silk and mounted as a pair of *kakemono*.



A

B

in its entirety. There are two such cycles in *Shingon*, intended to embody the material manifestation and the spiritual substratum of the cosmos. They are made up of groups of appropriate deities arranged in their respective compartments about a central figure of the Great Illuminator which varies according to the intention of the compartment. The assemblage of divinities constituting the material manifestation is called the Womb-Store cycle;[1] that constituting the spiritual substratum is called the Diamond or Indestructible cycle[2] (Plate XVI, A & B).

The Womb-Store is that aspect of the universe which is manifest in the behavior of material things considered, not as dead matter, but as the living energy developed by the cosmic soul. What gives vitality to these limitless existences is conceived in the forms of deities whose individual characteristics are delineated in the pictorial cycle. Here these figures are disposed in groups around a lotus flower, the heart of the universe. On each of the eight petals of the lotus is a deity, and the centre is occupied by the Great Illuminator, shown as in full possession of the cosmic truths.[3] This heart and the surrounding groups are intended to signify that the powers and virtues emanating from the central figures find separate embodiments in the persons of other deities who are gathered together in compartments according to their several classes, such as those who carry diamond thunderbolts (*vajra*), the symbol of firm resolution and indefatigable action; those who carry lotus flowers, the sign of purity and mercy; or jewel globes (*ratna*), the emblem of richness and benefaction. In the whole cycle there are twelve compartments containing a total of four hundred and fourteen figures, each of which represents a certain function. Their postures differ according to their respective significance, some appearing in dignified composure, others in charming benignity, others in fury or in the guise of distress and misery. Each is an integral part of the cosmic activity, and all are vivifying the world by their powers.

The Diamond Cycle, illustrating the spiritual aspect of the universe, is a graphic representation of the emanation and gradual evolution of the

[1] Sanskrit, *Garbha-kukṣi;* Japanese, *Taizō-kai.* [2] Sanskrit, *Vajra-dhātu;* Japanese, *Kongō-kai.*

[3] This is symbolized by the gesture of the hands, which I have explained to mean the fusion of the five elements.

indestructible prototypes, or eternal ideas, from the Great Illuminator. It contains nine squares which together make up the centre and eight petals of the lotus, the heart of the material world. Each square is outlined by narrow borders filled with mystic symbols and elaborate decorations, and enclosing groups of deities and emblems. Thus the central square, the source of all mental activities, contains five circles. The central circle, in turn, contains five Buddhas in meditation (*Dhyāni-Buddha*) and their attendants, and the central Buddha is the Great Illuminator, the heart of hearts. These five circles are enclosed within a large circle, and the whole represents the profound contemplation in which all truths of the material and spiritual worlds are fully realized. The rectangular border enclosing these circular groups is twofold: in the inner one are gathered the thousand Buddhas who have appeared as leaders of mankind in the different world-periods; and the outer one is studded with various gods of nature or of the Hindu pantheon, such as the Sun, the Moon, Brahmā, Indra, etc. These are intended to signify that, as the leaders of men and gods, they are the manifestations of one and the same cosmic soul, and may be companions to the souls of those who live in harmony with the cosmic life and in communion with the Great Illuminator.

The central square contains one thousand and sixty-one figures and shows the extremely complicated character of the mind, both cosmic and individual; but on the other hand the mind, as a well-concentrated unity, may be symbolized in the perfect person of the Great Illuminator. This state of unity is represented in the upper middle square of the Diamond Cycle, where the Great Illuminator sits alone on a lotus in an attitude of lofty composure, surrounded by an aureola of bright flame and completely enclosed within a circle of pure white light.[1] His face is expressive of absolute serenity, his posture of an inviolable dignity, and his hands are clasped together in the gesture symbolic of full illumination. The square itself is

[1] Compare Plate XIV. As already explained, one and the same deity may appear under different aspects, and the chief difference between the various appearances is well shown in the Diamond and Womb Cycles. The deities in the former are enclosed, as in this case, in the circle of light, while those in the Womb Cycle have only the double aureola. In the former case the lotus is included within the circle, while in the latter it is outside the aureola. White is predominant in the Diamond Cycle and red in the Womb Cycle.

bounded by a twofold rectangular border, filled with a graceful design of flowers and clouds instead of deities and emblems such as appear in the borders of other squares. Here, then, in the squares of the Diamond Cycle, we see contrasted the various aspects of the cosmic soul: its diversity, as expressed in the central group of over one thousand deities, and its unity, as embodied in the figure of the Great Illuminator.

A further illustration of this relationship between unity and diversity is to be found in the *Shingon* conception of worship. Inside the larger circle enclosed by the central square of the Diamond Cycle there are four single figures symmetrically disposed about the group of five smaller circles and representing respectively the Play, the Garland, the Song, and the Dance. In addition to these there is an isolated figure in each of the four angles of the inner border, representing the Incense, the Flower, the Lamp and the Perfume. All are known as Indestructible Entities and are associated with appropriate symbols. They are intended to signify the acts of worship and adoration paid to the Great Illuminator, of whom, however, they are manifestations; or in other words, the Great Illuminator, the cosmic soul, adores himself by these various emanations of his own spiritual powers, while they, the manifested Indestructibles, worship by their respective acts the real spiritual entity and source of all emanations. There is here represented the distinction existing between the worshipped and the worshippers, but it is at the same time implied that the two are not separate entities but, in reality, a unit. Thus the palpable representation of the acts of worship symbolizes the truth that worship or adoration is based on the spiritual ties which unite the worshippers with the worshipped. He who adores the Divinity which is the consummation of his ideals and the source of inspiration and consolation, is realizing the spirit of that Divinity in his own soul, because his soul is in communion with, and inspired by, the Divinity. This is the *Shingon* theory of worship presented as a corollary to its theory of the relation between unity and diversity, and the same idea is repeated in another square to the left of the central square in the Diamond Cycle. Here each of the deities surrounding a central Buddha carries a lotus flower, the act of worship consisting in

offering to various Buddhas the symbol of their own ideal purity and all-embracing hearts. This is a further extension of worship from the specific deity to the inclusion of all deities, and is tantamount to a development of the idea into the act.

In the pictorial representation of this theory it is important to notice that all the acts of worship are illustrated by what is beautiful, whether in color or in form, in rhythm, in odor, in style or in expression. The Play is the beauty of manner and posture; the Garland, of form and composition; the Song, of word and metre; the Dance, of movement and rhythm; the Flower, of color and fragrance; the Lamp, of light and warmth. Regarding the Incense and the Perfume, it should be remembered that perfume plays a great part in all Buddhist ceremonies, and that Buddhist artists used to burn incense in their studios.[1] In short, these symbolic figures typify the fundamental qualities of all branches of the fine arts and are summed up in the emblematic lotus flower. Their title, "Indestructible," may therefore be paraphrased by the term "Prototype," because they represent the ideal elements of art in the mind of the Great Illuminator. Indeed the artistic presentation of deities and the organization of elaborate rituals, both characteristic features of *Shingon* Buddhism, are embodied in this way in two squares of the Diamond Cycle, and it is a matter of pride among the *Shingon* Buddhists that they serve truth and beauty at the same time and by the same act. In a word, the worship of Divinity should not and cannot be dissociated from the cult of beauty, and art, therefore, must be an integral part of religion.

Without further comment on the significance of this cosmotheistic religion, it is already plain that we see here a very comprehensive world-view visualized in graphic representations of manifold figures and symbols. The art of painting has become an indispensable adjunct to the religion of cosmic communion, and inasmuch as this communion includes every kind of existence, the pictorial representation of the universe as a whole or in detail is necessarily made up of intricate symbolic suggestions and boldly imaginative personifications. Subtle reasoning united with daring con-

[1] In the *Zen* Buddhism, of which I shall speak in the fourth chapter, perfume gave place to tea; but incense retained its own, or an even greater, rôle in both the religion and the art of *Zen*.

PLATE XVII

Dai-Itoku-myōwō, the Great Majestic Power

PLATE XVII

Dai-Itoku-myōwō, the Great Majestic Power

Japanese, Tenth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Although his typical figure has six faces which exhibit the six miraculous powers, and six arms which purify the six resorts of transmigration, he is shown in this wood sculpture of the Fujiwara period with but three faces and two arms, the latter joined in the mystic form of the one-pointed *vajra*. The pedestal, though of early date, was not originally intended for this statue.

struction; high ideals expressed in terms of form and substance; figures of exquisite grace and profound serenity mingled with shapes of terrible power; — these are the characteristics of the *Shingon* religion and art. The mind may be calmed by the dignified composure of the Great Illuminator, but appalled by the all-devouring flame of the angry destroyer; and a deity of compassionate love may appear metamorphosed into a furious demon. Many of us would not care to look upon these dreadful figures, and might wonder why such monstrous forms were portrayed by artists. But to love good is to hate evil, and a deity may be represented from either point of view. The *Shingon* teachers might say to us: "You enjoy the serene dignity of the Great Illuminator because your inmost heart is in communion with him. You fear the stern and angry countenance of the Immobile Deity because you have in your mind and life that which could be chastised by his indignant sword." However this may be, the art of *Shingon*, though it abounds in conventional symbols and terrific figures, is nevertheless pervaded by undeniable grandeur and harmony throughout the whole scheme of the cosmic cycles. In many-sidedness the *Shingon* religion is an eclectic system, but in the emphasis it lays upon the ideal of communion, it is true Buddhism.

Additional illustrations of the foregoing may be drawn from the consideration of some of the individual deities who find places in the cycles. Dai-Itoku, or the Great Majestic Power, a modification of the Brahmanic Yamāntaka, the god of death, is supposed to be a metamorphosis of Monju, the god of wisdom, and occupies an important position in the Womb Cycle, under the central compartment. He has six faces, furious in expression and livid in color; his hair is fire; his six arms carry a spear, a sword, a staff, a rope, bows and arrows, and he sits on a rugged rock, surrounded by flame. This figure, dire as it is, represents the irresistible power of death which kills all evils and vices (Plate XVII). Fudō, or the Immobile Deity, to whom I have already referred as a manifestation of the Great Illuminator, is another example of a formidable figure; and, indeed, there are many others who are thought to be modifications of the deities of wis-

dom or mercy (Plate XVIII). This belief is not difficult to understand if we consider the fact that in the human mind righteous wisdom becomes resentful indignation when directed against wickedness, and loving kindness may involve uncompromising austerity when confronted with a transgression. The wisdom that comprehends all truth and allows no point thereof to remain obscure, becomes a repressive and conquering power when directed against ignorance and prejudice; in like manner, love embraces all and therefore enforces its influence upon those who would disregard it. This is what *Shingon* teaches in doctrine and makes visible in painted and sculptured representations.

Now let us see how the spirit of mercy is personified. One of the most popular deities of mercy included in the cosmic cycles is Kwannon (Plates XIX and XX, A, B, & C), who has already been described in his manifestation as the merciful All-Mother (Plate VII). His Sanskrit name, Avalokiteśvara, probably meaning On-looking Sovereign, is masculine in gender, and though he appears sometimes as a formidable conqueror, he is oftener and perhaps more properly shown as a deity of love and compassion, quite feminine in the gentleness of his expression. Hence he is preëminently known and worshipped as a merciful benefactor of mankind. In his hand he carries a lotus flower; his bright hair hangs beautifully about his shoulders, which are always draped, and the rest of his body is partly covered with veils and garlands. Another beloved and kindly benefactor is Jizō, or Kṣiti-garbha, the Earth-Womb (Plate XXI), who visits the subterranean worlds where doomed spirits are suffering. He carries in his right hand a pilgrim's staff provided at the top with jingling rings which serve to arouse the spirits in agony to the presence of an all-embracing mercy, and in his left hand he holds a jewel symbolizing the inexhaustible richness of bliss and wisdom with which he liberally endows all the destitute. He appears most frequently as a monk, his shaved head encircled by a radiant halo; and wherever he goes there spring up lotus flowers beneath his feet.

Associated with Jizō as a beneficent deity is Kokuzō, or Ākāśa-garbha, the Sky-Womb (Plates XXII and XXIII), also a god of wisdom. But

PLATE XVIII

Aizen-myōwō, the Great Passion

PLATE XVIII

AIZEN-MYŌWŌ (SANSKRIT, *Rāga*), THE GREAT PASSION

JAPANESE, EARLY FOURTEENTH CENTURY

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

THIS deity symbolizes the passions which, left to themselves, are sources of vice, but when well controlled are sources of the power to strive for definite aims. His expression is fierce and strong. He has three pairs of arms carrying, respectively, a lotus and a stick with which to strike the wicked; a bow and arrows with which to attack human passions; a five-pointed *vajra* and a bell, with which to awaken all sentient beings to self-consciousness and lead them to reflection. In this wood sculpture, of the Kamakura period, the emblems and parts of the arms are restored.

PLATE XIX

KWANNON

PLATE XIX

Kwannon

Japanese, Eighth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

This heroic wood sculpture of the compassionate *Bodhisattva* shows him in the attitude of conferring a blessing with his right hand, while in his left he originally held a lotus. In piety of expression and simplicity of execution the figure is representative of the sculpture of the Tempyō period, before ideas of complicated decoration were seriously considered, and it is interesting to notice how strongly the influence of Indian prototypes is maintained in the pose of the body as well as in the attire of the loins. The arms and the free end of drapery just below the breast are restorations, though not of recent date.

PLATES XX A, XX B, XX C

KWANNON

PLATES XX A, XX B, & XX C

KWANNON

Artist unknown

JAPANESE, KAMAKURA PERIOD, LATE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

THIS deity is believed to manifest himself in six, twenty-one, or thirty-three different forms, in order to induce enlightenment and felicity in beings of various kinds. Three of the set of six manifestations are illustrated here.

A. Byaku-é Kwannon (Sanskrit, *Pāṇḍara-vāsinī*), the White-robed, is a feminine manifestation. Her whole body is pale gold in tone, and is partly covered with thin veils "like morning mists." In her right hand she holds a casket containing the sacred scripture, and in her left, a cord. She is supposed to avert disaster in response to prayer.

B. Shō-Kwannon (Sanskrit, *Ārya-Avalokiteśvara*), the Holy Compassionate Lord. This is the most usual appearance of the deity. In his left hand he holds a lotus flower, symbolic of the essence of enlightenment inherent in every one's soul, which he induces to bloom more fully by the gesture of his right hand. On his head he wears a crown in which is set a figure of the Buddha Amita, Lord of the Western Paradise, whom Kwannon serves.

C. Nyoirin Kwannon (Sanskrit, *Cintāmaṇi-cakra*), the Lord who, having mastered the secret of the *Cintāmaṇi* Jewel, turns the mysterious Wheel of Truth (*Dharma-cakra*). He has six arms. The first right hand supports the chin, — an attitude of meditation in compassion for beings immersed in the purgatories ; the second holds the Jewel which grants every wish, so that response may be made to the needs of hungry ghosts; the third holds a rosary which redeems bestial existence; the first left hand rests on a symbolic representation of a mountain, implying the salvation of ferocious spirits (Sanskrit, *Asura*) by the virtue of firmness; the second holds a lotus which purifies mankind of all depravities; and the third grasps the wheel of truth which governs the cosmos and enlightens all beings. The crown is set with a figure of Buddha Amita, and the lotus pedestal rests on a rock in the sea of wisdom.

Painted in colors and gold on wooden shrine doors.

B

PLATE XXI

Jizō, the Earth-Womb

PLATE XXI

Jizō, the Earth-Womb

Artist unknown

Japanese, Early Fourteenth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The calm dignity of the figure well represents the merciful benefactor of mankind, always ready, in a spirit of compassion, to give anything out of the inexhaustible jewel which he holds in his left hand. The picture, a work of the late Kamakura period, shows great delicacy and freedom in spite of the rigid iconographical rules of *Shingon* Buddhism.

Painted in colors and gold on silk, and mounted as a *kakemono*.

PLATE XXII

Kokuzō, the Sky-Womb

PLATE XXII

Kokuzō, the Sky-Womb

Artist unknown

Japanese, Thirteenth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

He symbolizes the union of wisdom and compassion, the two cardinal virtues of Buddha. Both of these virtues are all-comprehensive and indestructible, like the sky; hence his name. He wears the pentagonal crown of the five-fold wisdom, the wisdom which includes and penetrates all; his right arm hangs with the palm of the hand directed toward his worshippers, signifying unlimited giving; and the left hand holds a lotus flower on which is deposited the jewel of inexhaustible wealth. His double halos emit flame and his whole body is surrounded by another halo symbolizing his immersion in the all-pervading wisdom. The seven small figures above represent the seven stars of the constellation Ursa Major, and the nine figures below represent the sun, the moon, the five planets, Rāhu (*eclipse*) and Ketu (*comet,*) together known as the nine heavenly bodies. All are shown in the forms of the Hindu deities who were believed to be the noumena of these stars.

Painted in gold and colors on silk and mounted as a *kakemono.*

PLATE XXIII

Kokuzō, the Sky-Womb

PLATE XXIII

Kokuzō, the Sky-Womb

Artist unknown

Japanese, Late Fourteenth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

A description of this deity may be found in the legend attached to Plate XXII. As depicted here he holds the sword of wisdom in his right hand, and in the lower part of the painting a view of Mount Asakuma, in the Yamato style, is introduced according to the usual practice of painters of the Kasuga school — a branch of the Yamato. The picture, dating from early Ashikaga times, is a skilful but somewhat mechanical repetition of the conventional *Ryōbu* figure of Kokuzō, and is offered as a good illustration of the Japanizing process in Buddhist art.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a *kakemono.*

PLATE XXIV

Monju, the Charming Splendor

PLATE XXIV

Monju, the Charming Splendor

Artist unknown

Japanese, Early Fourteenth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The deity is shown here as a boy representing the fresh vigor and youthful dignity of wisdom. In his right hand he carries a sword, emblematic of penetrating insight; and in his left he holds a lotus flower on which a sacred text, the store of truth, is laid. He rides upon a lion, — his frequent associate. The picture is a work of the late Kamakura period in which the rules of *Shingon* iconography are rather loosely treated, and the outlines much softened.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a *kakemono.*

PLATE XXV

Monju, the Charming Splendor

PLATE XXV

MONJU, THE CHARMING SPLENDOR

Artist unknown

JAPANESE, KAMAKURA PERIOD, THIRTEENTH CENTURY

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

SEE the legend accompanying Plate XXIV. The deity is shown here with a scroll, instead of a sword, in his right hand, and without his lion.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a *kakemono.*

PLATE XXVI

Fugen, the All-pervading Wisdom

PLATE XXVI

FUGEN, THE ALL-PERVADING WISDOM

Artist unknown

JAPANESE, EARLY TWELFTH CENTURY

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

HE appears here as the Giver of Life, in a special manifestation known as Fugen En-myō, the Indestructible Existence, a consequence of wisdom and insight. The elephant he rides is standing on the Indestructible Wheel of the cosmos, and has three heads, each provided with six tusks which are sometimes explained as symbolic of the subjugation of the six sources of temptation, — i. e., the five senses and the will. Ranged in pairs on either side are the four Guardian Kings. The picture, originally one member of a triptych, dates from the Fujiwara period and conforms, for the most part, to the iconographical rules of *Shingon* Buddhism.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a panel.

PLATES XXVII A, XXVII B, XXVII C

THE SHAKA TRIAD

PLATES XXVII A, XXVII B & XXVII C

THE SHAKA TRIAD

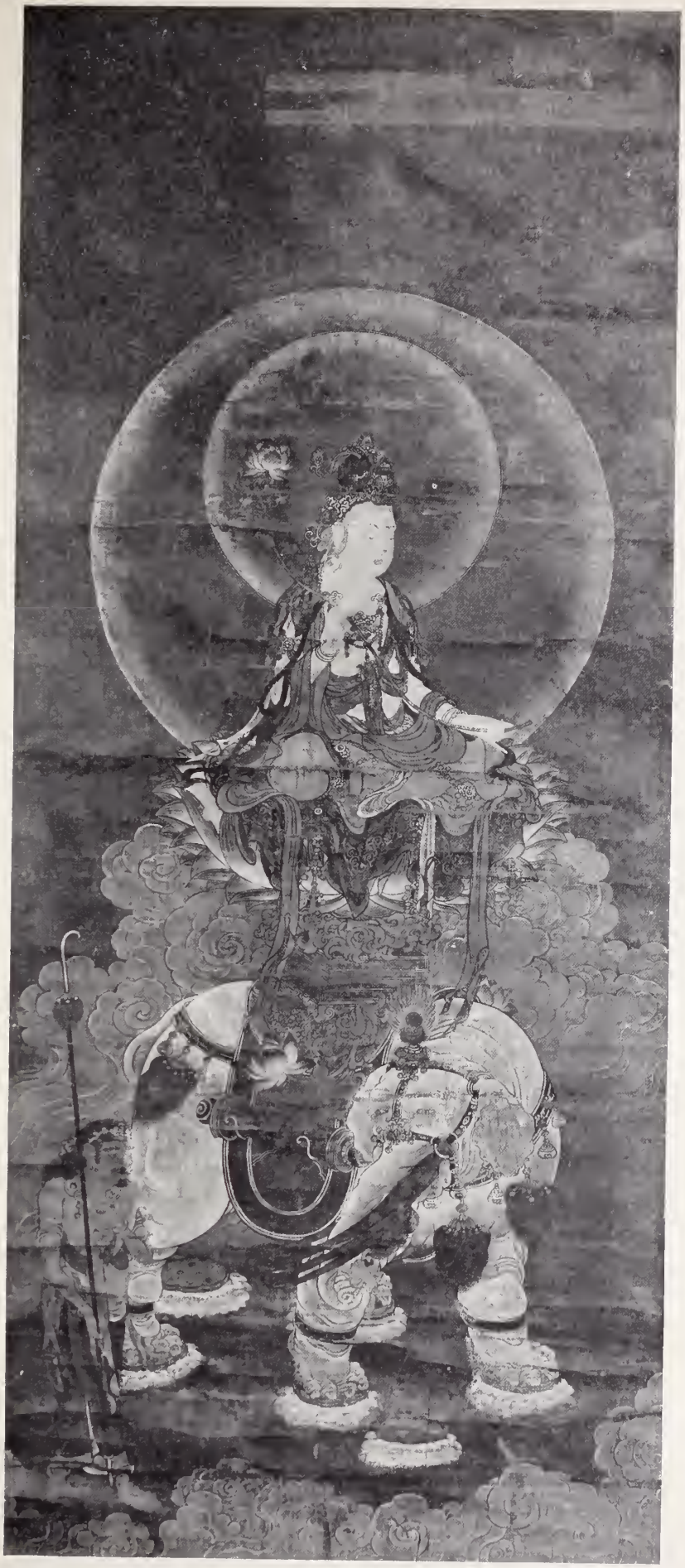
Artist unknown

JAPANESE, LATE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

WHEN Shaka Buddha (B) appears accompanied by these two *Bodhisattva*, Fugen (A) on his right and Monju (C) on his left, he is understood to be preaching the *Mahāyāna*, or Greater Vehicle — a suggestion derived from the same source as the *Shingon* symbolism, but older than the latter and not native to it. This triptych is a work of the Ashikaga period and is a well-preserved example of the conventional Takuma style.

Painted in colors and gold on silk and mounted as three *kakemono*.



A

C

PLATE XXVIII

A Syncretic Maṇḍala

PLATE XXVIII

A Syncretic Maṇḍala

Artist unknown

Japanese, Thirteenth Century

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The fundamental tenet of the *Ryōbu*, or Syncretic, *Shinto* was that every existence had two aspects, the ideal and the actual as represented by its two cycles. This doctrine, applied to the indigenous deities of Japan, was so formulated that every Japanese deity was explained to be a manifestation of a Buddhist deity. The pictorial version of this doctrine here reproduced, represents the deities of Kasuga temple in their Buddhist noumena: Shaka, in the centre; Yakushi (*Bhaiśājya-guru*), the Lord of medicine, above on the right; Jizō, above on the left; Monju, with sword and scripture, below on the left; and the Eleven Headed Kwannon, with a flask in his left hand, below on the right. In the background above is the hill of Kasuga or Mikasa. As an illustration of the belief in the deity of Kasuga, the following hymn of the eleventh century is not without interest: —

> "The Deity of Mikasa hill,
> Whom we worship and to whom we now pray,
> Is surely looking upon us.
> So long as we are blessed by him,
> Sure is the prosperity of our lord,
> Who rules the lands under heaven."

The syncretic idea dates from the eighth century, but this mode of representation is not earlier than the twelfth century, and the picture is a still later work of the Kamakura period.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a *kakemono.*

more important, perhaps, in this latter respect is Monju, or Manjuśri, the Charming Splendor (Plates XXIV, XXV and XXVII C), to whom reference has already been made as the noumenon of Dai-Itoku. He is a beautiful and kingly youth, whose wisdom is conspicuously symbolized in the sword with which he cuts away all doubts and perplexities. He is often shown mounted on a lion, the emblem of valor and energy, those indispensable complements of wisdom; and he appears, too, as a youthful prince who, like wisdom, is ever fresh and vigorous. The associate of Monju is Fugen, or Samantabhadra, the All-pervading Wisdom (Plates XXVI and XXVII A), also a noble youth, who wears the crown of the fivefold wisdom, carries a sword, or a vessel from which he pours forth the water of wisdom, and often rides upon an elephant, the symbol of sagacity and prudence.

Inasmuch as a single deity may manifest himself in a variety of ways limited only by the possible aspects of his character and virtues, it is obvious that the number of figures and symbols represented may be multiplied to almost any extent. But omitting all further descriptions of them, let us, in conclusion, follow up a related offshoot of the ideas underlying *Shingon* art. At a comparatively early date the Buddhist notion that the cosmic communion must be extended to every phase of existence and that the deities may appear in any forms, had been applied to the indigenous pantheon of Japan. All the Japanese gods were thus absorbed into the Buddhist communion, each of them was explained to be but another manifestation of a Buddhist deity, and the result was the formation of a syncretic religion called *Ryōbu Shinto*, to which the device of the *maṇḍala*, or pictorial cycle was naturally applied. In these paintings, known as *Ryōbu*, or syncretic *maṇḍala* (Plate XXVIII), the stars, animals, women, semi-divine children and various other figures were mingled with Hindu gods, and Japanese deities clad in Sino-Japanese robes like those of the court nobles and *Shinto* priests, were represented side by side with Buddhist divinities and patriarchs.

The syncretic *Shinto* had, indeed, been in vogue before the rise of the *Ryōbu maṇḍala;* but so long as the *Shingon* Buddhists adhered to their

own rules in depicting their own deities, any deviation from these rules by members of the sect was inadmissible. Nevertheless, the freer treatment of Buddhist subjects progressed step by step, as we have seen in the works of Eshin and his followers; and those forms of religious faith inspired by personal devotion and not totally proscribed by tradition, suited their artistic expression rather to indigenous than to exotic requirements, by introducing native landscapes and life into religious pictures. This Japanizing process has already been discussed in connection with the Buddhist *genre* painting which came into prominence during the twelfth century, and with which the development of the *Ryōbu maṇḍala* was so closely associated that artists of the Tosa and Kasuga schools worked in both manners. The syncretic *maṇḍala* itself is characterized more by charm than by dignity, by harmony of colors rather than by brilliancy. It succeeded not only in making the Buddhist deities seem less remote, but also in providing the *Shinto* deities with artistic forms; while the composition of its background contributed, in association with the Buddhist *genre* painting, to the development of a pure landscape style and to the secularization of *Shingon* art.

At this point we must leave behind the symbolism of the cosmic system, with its many beautiful and dire visions, and turn at last to the realm and ways of mankind. Our path has already led us through the delicate and magnificent art of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as well as through those artistic phases of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries wherein the influence of *Shingon* mystery and iconography still lingered. Now, however, we approach another branch of Buddhism which was introduced into Japan during the thirteenth century and was destined to have a profound effect in simplifying the then existing forms of Buddhist thought and expression through the emphasis it laid upon the adequacy of untrammelled nature.

PLATE XXIX

A Landscape. By Sesshū

PLATE XXIX

A Landscape

By Sesshū, 1420–1506

Japanese, Ashikaga Idealistic School

In the Imperial Museum, Tōkyō

Painted in ink on paper and mounted as a *kakemono.*

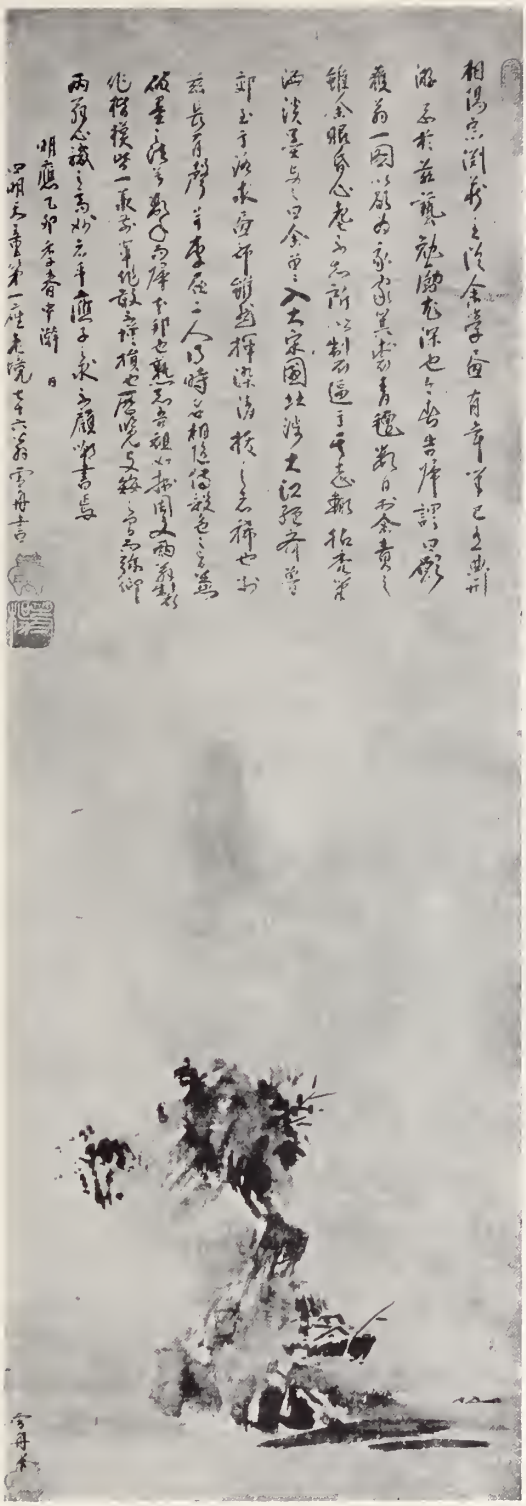


PLATE XXX

Ideal Portrait of Bodhidharma. By Mên Wu-kuan (*Mon-mukwan*)

PLATE XXX

Ideal Portrait of Bodhidharma
First Patriarch of Zen Buddhism in China

By Mên Wu-kuan (*Mon-mukwan*)

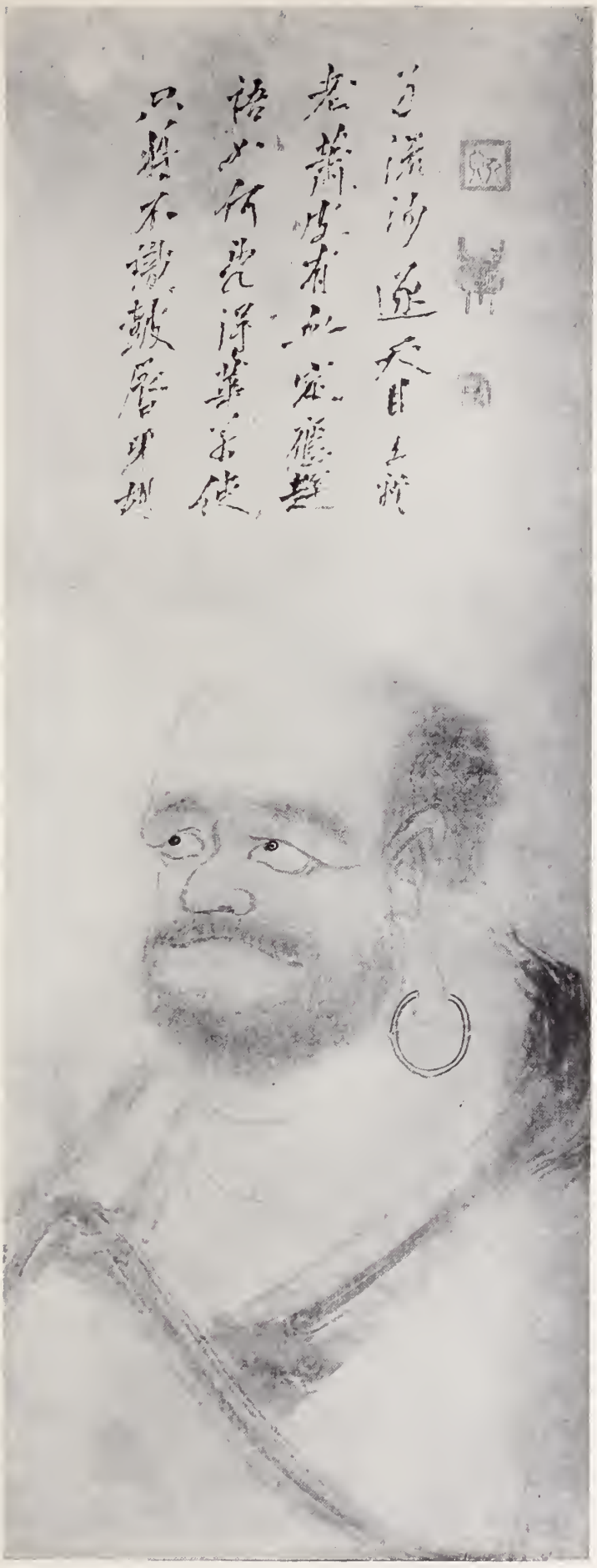
Chinese, Thirteenth Century

Owned by Myōshin-ji, near Kyōto,
and now deposited in the Imperial Museum, Kyōto

This picture is the middle one of a set of three, the other two, in accordance with the frequent usages of Zenists, representing things commonly met with in nature. The painter was a *Zen* monk whose name, "Gateway without Doors," suggests the Zenist ideal of mental freedom. The poem at the top of the picture is by Wen Li (1206–89), a Chinese monk of Mount Tien-mu, and comments on the expression of the patriarch to the following effect: —

"O thou solitary sage! hast thou a skin?
Then surely blood is streaming in thee.
Canst utter words?
Given a flower, what wouldst do?
Thy lips would be a drum, thy chin a banner, eh?"

Painted in ink on paper and mounted as a *kakemono.*



IV

BUDDHIST NATURALISM AND INDIVIDUALISM: THE TRANSITION FROM RELIGIOUS TO SECULAR ARTS

To illustrate the descent from the cloudy heights of mysticism to the clearer plain of human abode, I may best begin by calling attention to a landscape (Plate XXIX) in black and white, — like some view seen in a dream. In the foreground are suggestions of rocks, trees and a beach, all drawn with a few strokes, as if the artist had to spare both ink and brush. In the background appear faint shades, probably distant precipices. Modern critics would classify this sketch among the works of impressionism or idealism, and such classification may well be correct as far as it goes. But we are concerned here less with the class to which a painting belongs than with the religious motive which inspired the painter. In the present instance the artist was a Buddhist monk, Sesshū (1420–1506), one of the greatest of Japanese painters; and this landscape was given by him to one of his disciples in recognition not only of proficiency in art, but also of spiritual attainment in Buddhist training. How, then, and in what sense could this be a religious painting?

In order to prepare for the solution of this question, I shall ask consideration for another ink drawing (Plate XXX). Here you see the face of a man who seems to be looking at something intently. His mouth is tightly closed, whether in a sarcastic smile or in determined resolution, one can hardly tell, but surely in perpetual silence. A few rough, vigorous strokes indicate that his hands are folded under a robe which covers his shoulders and leaves his breast exposed. Simplicity and boldness of composition and suggestiveness of line are apparent; and these technical characteristics are so combined in the singular expression of the figure, as to indicate reserves of strength behind the outward composure. The picture is meant to be a portrait of Bodhidharma,[1] the first patriarch of *Zen* Buddhism in China.

[1] Japanese, *Daruma;* Chinese, *Ta-mo.*

He came to that country in the sixth century, and from his life and teachings Japanese Buddhism, after the thirteenth century, derived its inspiration. This portrait was undoubtedly based upon an older one taken from life; but in all probability such considerations did not greatly concern the artist, whose object was to show the face and posture typical of a man who had attained a lofty spiritual training in the sect of *Zen*. It is believed also that the simple technique and bold expression are in real accordance with the spirit of that teaching, as well as with the ideal look of the patriarch.

As in the landscape we have just considered, so in this portrait there prevails a mood of deep serenity resulting from the spiritual attainment and mental purity which were identified with the "life-movement of the spirit through the rhythm of things," as Mr. Okakura has expressed it.[1] This affinity of the artist's mind for the rhythm of the world gives to his work an air of inwardness. According to these painters, a picture should be the soul of nature brought to a focus before the purified, spiritual eyes of man, — the cosmic spirit embodied in a little space through a mind in full grasp of the cosmos; and thus it is the pulsation of the cosmic rhythm in the individual mind that gives the serenity of the "air-rhythm"[2] and the pure outline of the "wind-frame."[3] This religion, — though application of the word religion to it may seem not quite well fitted, — this Buddhist religion, brought to Japan through China together with its art and poetry, was destined to supersede the *Shingon* mysteries and to pervade human life with a spirit of naturalism.

Zen was a branch of Buddhism which laid special emphasis upon meditation. Its adherents believed that to them had been directly transmitted the spiritual illumination of Buddha, and they cultivated his method of meditation simply and purely, without admixture of mysterious rituals and doctrinal analysis. They had, moreover, inherited the nature-

[1] Quoting from the words of the Chinese artist Hsieh Ho (Japanese, Shakaku) in *The Ideals of the East*, p. 52. Hsieh Ho lived during the Southern Chi dynasty, A.D. 479–502.

[2] A term expressive of spiritual vitality, nobility, and refinement. It is the first of the Six Canons of painting formulated by Hsieh Ho.

[3] This term denotes simultaneous conception and composition, and implies a free, unmannered quality of brush work. It is a requisite of good painting demanded by the Chinese artist Wang Chung-shu of the Sui dynasty, 589–618.

mysticism[1] of the Indian Buddhists which, together with the poetry of the southern Chinese, became a source of inspiration for the artistic sense of the Japanese. The chief effort of this sect was directed toward the attainment of spiritual enlightenment through personal experience in contemplation, and the effects of this practice were shown in manifestations of strong individuality. At the same time a feeling for the tranquil beauty of nature produced a serene "air-rhythm" of transcendence over the incidents of human life. This somewhat paradoxical combination of individualism and transcendentalism resulted in an identification of self with the world, a state to be realized only through insight into the heart and spirit of nature. Passion, or even enthusiasm, is an impediment to this attainment and reason is useless; the essential is intuition, which illumines the mind like a flash in darkness, and pervades the whole air like moonlight.

Let me elucidate these points a little further. The practitioner of *Zen*, whom I might call a Zenist, takes pride in the thought that his method is an unwritten tradition originally transmitted by Buddha to his great disciple Mahā-Kāśyapa, when the Master lifted a flower in his hand and the disciple responded to the implied riddle with silence and a smile. What question this flower was meant to convey, or why it was answered by a smile can be realized only intuitively and in meditation. But the transmission itself is not based on Buddha's invention or on any artifice; it traverses the innermost recesses of the mind enlightened in the truths of nature, so that every Zenist should receive his spiritual illumination through the medium of his own soul, directly from the vast sources of the cosmos. All instruction is but as a finger pointing to the moon; and he whose gaze is fixed upon the pointer will never see beyond. Even let him catch sight of the moon, and still he cannot see its beauty unless his mind be innocent of passion and commotion. In order to commune heart to heart with the cosmos and see its reality as it is, he must first free himself from the interference of special concern and from the captivation of thought. His mind should be purged of such encumbrances, like the mind of one who loiters in the translucent air of night and enjoys the clear, serene moonlight,

[1] On this point see especially Mrs. Rhys Davids' *The Hymns of the Early Buddhists.*

calmly and freely. This is the ideal of the Zenist, to be attained through spiritual exercise in meditation. We must, however, be careful in using the word meditation not to mistake it for cogitation, because the *Zen* practice of meditation is not a mode of deliberate reflection, not thinking in the usual sense, but consists rather in an evacuation of the mind, a process through which alone we can fully exercise our intuitive insight.

What, then, is to be apprehended by that intuition? Here again our common sense stumbles and our thought is defied. A great master of *Zen* said: "Is there obverse or reverse in transparent water? Is there inside or outside in vacant space? There is that which is luminous and clear, spontaneous and disembodied. Therein is no differentiation of forms and colors; no antithesis of object and subject. [It is] one and the same since eternity; no term to describe it, for ever."[1] This it is that underlies our selves, our souls; this is the primordial essence of each and all existence. The same master says in another passage: "See the high mountain. The summit is hidden; yet far beyond the clouds the eyes catch the light by which it is illumined. Look into the deep ocean. The bottom cannot be seen; yet the depth can be penetrated without taking thought. Silence is eloquent enough to make clear the essence; and even while sitting in repose the cosmos can be grasped. The whole being is bare and apparent; it is that of a colossus expanding beyond measure, — a giant without motion or emotion; no twilight can impede his vision, nor any dust besmirch his feet." Such is the true nature of the condition which is inherent in our own souls and is realized completely by the intuitive faculty of a mind trained in *Zen*.

This kind of enigmatic utterance may, however, confuse rather than clarify the content of the *Zen* view. But precisely this riddle, which is a stumbling block to every one, is what the Zenists are eager to attack and to elucidate in their acts. The riddle of the world and life is not, they would say, very different from other riddles which, when solved, involve nothing extraordinary or amazing in itself, but always reveal simple truths plain to everybody. The manner of solution, moreover, is not dependent on

[1] By Keizan (1268–1325) in his *Zazen Yōjin Ki*, or "What is to be kept in mind during the *Zen* session." The present translation hardly carries the "air-rhythm" of the original Chinese, which is simple and terse, with few conjunctions or prepositions.

PLATE XXXI

Shaka. In the style of Kano Utanosuke

PLATE XXXI

SHAKA

IN THE STYLE OF KANO UTANOSUKE, 1513–1575 (?)

JAPANESE, KANO SCHOOL

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

THIS work of an early Kano master represents the Buddha as a solitary recluse, in a manner characteristic of the *Zen* ideals.

Painted in ink on paper and mounted as a *kakemono.*

PLATE XXXII

White-robed Kwannon. By Kano Motonobu

PLATE XXXII

White-robed Kwannon

By Kano Motonobu, 1476–1559

Japanese, Kano School

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The deity is here shown wrapt in meditation, in the midst of nature, and from the idea expressed, as well as from its manner of expression, an adequate conception may be formed of the way in which conventional Buddhist painting was combined with the freer landscape style, thus leading, by degrees, to the secularization of Buddhist art. In this instance the draped figure still retains much of the Buddhist conventionality, while the surrounding landscape reflects the influence of the great Chinese painters of earlier times.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a panel.

mathematical calculation or logical thinking, but on intuition and sagacity. Indeed deliberation and cogitation are often embarrassments rather than solvents, and the best plan is to approach the enigma with an artless and unfettered mind. Whatever philosophers may say, the Zenists try to solve the riddle of the universe in just this way.

Zen[1] means meditation, and its method consists in *Zazen*, or tranquil session. An older contemporary of the master whose words I have already quoted gives instructions[2] for this practice as follows: "Arrange a seat of matting at a suitable place and lay a cushion upon it. Then sit down cross-legged, placing the right foot upon the left thigh and the left foot upon the right thigh. Put on robes and a girdle not too tight and preserve their symmetry. Then put the right hand (palm upward) on the calf of the left leg, lay the back of the left hand upon the palm of the right hand, and let the tips of the two thumbs touch each other. Sit thus, keeping the body erect, inclining neither to the right nor to the left, bending neither forward nor backward. Let the ears be just above the shoulders and the nose be directed toward the abdomen. Lay the tongue against the roof of the mouth and keep the lips and teeth closed. The eyes should be kept open; the breath should flow gently through the nostrils. When the bodily position is thus established, exhale a deep breath; then remain seated after (having examined the posture by) swinging the body slightly to the right and left. Thereafter proceed to the contemplation of what is beyond thought." The effect of this posture upon the mind may be tested even in sitting on a chair. In any case the point is to maintain tranquillity of mind and to reach a depth of introspection beyond the disturbance of outside bustle or mental commotion. To describe this condition is an impossibility, but from what I have said it can be seen that *Zen* is a method of quietism.

Suppose, then, that the mind has attained this ideal state of repose, — that it is quieted, poised, liberated, so to speak, — what would be the view of life and the world seen in that condition? The Zenist looks down from

[1] The word *Zen* is the Japanese abbreviation of the Chinese *Ch'an-no* which was pronounced in old Chinese something like *Janna* and was adopted as the transliteration of the Sanskrit *Dhyāna* and the Pāli *Jhāna*.

[2] Dōgen (1200–53), in his *Fukwan Zazen Gi*, or "Admonition to all in the practice of the Tranquil Session."

his eminence upon human activities, as if houses and farms, men and horses, together constituted some miniature landscape with its life and movement.[1] He has no concern whatever as to whether the farms are fertile, or as to who is gaining or losing. His mind, finding unbroken quiet deep in the heart of nature, perceives the motion and the change in things as fleet expressions stirring, perhaps, the profound repose of nature's face. In the world many are born and many die; the years roll on, the seasons follow one after another; leaves bud out green and wither, flowers bloom and are scattered. Let them come and go as they may; the Zenist observes it all in cool composure, though not in stupid indifference. What interests him is the calmly flowing aspect of this perpetual change, or, more properly, the eternal tranquillity seen through and behind the changes. In his sight, the beauty and grandeur of a waterfall consist in its motion as a whole, — not in the movement of particular drops and bubbles; and it was this motion that the Zenist enjoyed as a symbol of the general, everlasting flow of nature. The world he sees — like the landscapes painted by Sesshū — is without dazzling color and vivid movement. Through his mind all phenomena are drawn into that quiet abyss of the spiritual ocean where there are neither waves nor whirlpools, and where the individual coalesces with the vast expanse of nature and with the unchangeable continuity of the universe. In short, *Zen* is a naturalism which defies the lure of human activities and absorbs nature and life into the all-embracing tranquillity of the mind identified with the cosmos.

There is still another feature of *Zen* which assumes great significance in relation not only to moral life, but also to æsthetic expression. That feature is individualism. The *Zen* enlightenment is a highly refined abstraction. This abstraction is not, however, a mere negation of the concrete or a teaching of nothingness, but a transcendent view of the world. Its attainment consists in detachment from commotion and in steadfastness amid surrounding changes. The mind of a Zenist may be compared with a rock upstanding from the depths of the sea, resisting and defying the perpetual movement of the waves; it is also like the pure moonlight, some-

[1] Similarly expressed by Maeterlinck in his *La Sagesse et la Destinée.*

times obscured by clouds, yet never losing its purity or its power of beautifying whatever it illuminates.[1] Strength to meet weal and woe equally, to enjoy life and nature in absolute composure and lofty calmness, — such is the aim of the *Zen* practice.

> "The soul which is not moved,
> The soul which with a strong and constant calm
> Takes sorrow and takes joy indifferently,
> Lives in the life undying." [2]

Determination bordering on stubbornness, tranquillity akin to apathy, self-continence mistakable for indifference, — therein were manifested the results of the individualistic culture of *Zen*.

As a method of achieving a union of the individual soul with the cosmic spirit, *Zen* training manifested itself in art of a transcendental kind. Naturalism and intuitionism enabled the Zenist not only to absorb the serenely transient beauty of nature, but also to express it, distinct from human passions and interests, in placid dignity and pure simplicity; while individualism, a necessary consequence of *Zen* practice, found expression in a vigor and freshness of artistic treatment implying always a touch of original genius. Thus the æsthetic sense developed by the culture consisted essentially in disinterested observation and penetrating insight which produced a feeling of intimacy with the universe and caused man to mould his life and taste in accordance with the "air-rhythm" of nature. Since, however, high attainment in *Zen* was limited to a few men of indefatigable persistence, the best products of its art showed an intellectual loftiness suggestive of aristocracy. Yet its influence pervaded the lives of the people and moulded their perceptions in every branch of art, — in the composition of poems, the building of houses and furnishing of rooms; in methods of flower arrangement, of gardening, and even of preparing and drinking tea. Indeed, there is in Japan hardly a form of thought or activity that

[1] Herein lies the reason why Zenists often name themselves in terms of nature, as: Scattered-Stone, Thousand-Stone, Oak-Shade, Cloud-Peak, Lake-Heart, Heart-Moon, Moon-Valley, Cloud-Rock, Rugged-Precipice, Without-Cloud, etc. The name of the famous Sesshū means Snow-Boat, and there are still others of a contradictory turn, such as Silent-Thunder, Stone-Water, etc.

[2] Edwin Arnold, in *The Song Celestial*.

Zen has not touched and inspired with its ideal of simple beauty. Music and sculpture may, perhaps, be counted exceptions to this rule, probably because to a Zenist music was too charming and sculpture too corporeal. There was, however, a taste for lifelike representations of ideal Zenists,[1] which caused some, though not many, portraits to be executed in sculpture. There was, too, a special kind of bamboo flute, called *shaku-hachi*, in use among groups of wandering *Zen* monks, known as *Komu-sō*, or "Vacuity Friars." The instrument emits subdued tones whose effect is more suggestive of inward absorption than of sentimental expression, and is thought to be in sympathy with the hidden rhythm of the cosmic soul. But after all, the strongest artistic expression of *Zen* was painting, especially in black and white.

The *Zen* painters drew both landscapes and figures. There are pictures of Buddha and his disciples, of various deities and of the patriarchs, which were painted, not as likenesses of individuals [2] but as types representing the Zenist's ideal of enlightenment personified. All deities are deprived of their traditional glories and decorations, of their golden light and brilliant colors, and appear simply as human figures, semi-naked or clad in white robes, abiding in the midst of nature. Buddha may be shown under a tree or among clouds, surrounded by his disciples. Here the original idea of communion is preserved, but the master no longer preaches to his hearers or manifests his supernatural body; he simply suggests a question, as by holding up a flower, and leaves the solution to the by-standers. The sermon is given in silence, and communion with the invisible hearers is tacitly established. He, or one of his disciples, is painted also as a solitary recluse, sitting in meditation, or standing wrapt in thought, or perhaps wandering from nowhere to nowhere (Plate XXXI).

Reproduced in Plate XXXII is a picture of a lady dressed in pure white and seated on a rock by the waterside. She seems to look at the vast

[1] Due rather to the pious memory, verging on filial affection, in which Zenists held their masters, than to the individualistic character of *Zen*.

[2] The painting of Bodhidharma (Plate XXX) illustrates, however, a class of *Zen* portraits in which individual firmness of character and tranquillity of mind are clearly indicated. The connection of *Zen* training with the military life of Japan also helped to develop portrait painting, in which the vigorous character of Zenist warriors was powerfully depicted.

PLATE XXXIII

KWANNON. IN THE STYLE OF SESSHŪ

PLATE XXXIII

KWANNON

IN THE STYLE OF SESSHŪ, 1420–1506

JAPANESE, ASHIKAGA IDEALISTIC SCHOOL

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

HERE the deity appears in feminine form, absorbed in meditation and seated on the back of a dragon.

Painted in ink and traces of color on paper and mounted as a *kakemono.*

PLATE XXXIV

Monju. By Kano Tanyō

PLATE XXXIV

Monju

By Kano Tanyō, Eighteenth Century

Japanese, Kano School

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The deity is here shown in semi-worldly guise as a young prince. The picture, though sufficiently typical of its kind, is weak in execution, and is reproduced here merely as an illustration of the secularized Buddhist motive.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a *kakemono.*

PLATE XXXV

Monju. By Hōsetsu

PLATE XXXV

Monju

By Hōsetsu, Fifteenth Century

Japanese, Ashikaga Idealistic School

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

In this characteristic *Zen* work, the deity is simply shown as an old man seated on the back of his familiar lion. Painted in ink on paper and mounted as a *kakemono.*

PLATE XXXVI

The Arhant (*Rakan*) Ānanda Feeding a Hungry Ghost
By Chou Chi-chang (*Shū-kijo*) and Lin T'ing-kuei (*Rin-teikei*)

PLATE XXXVI

THE ARHANT (*Rakan*) ĀNANDA FEEDING A HUNGRY GHOST
BY CHOU CHI-CHANG (*Shū-kijo*) AND LIN T'ING-KUEI (*Rin-teikei*)
CHINESE, TWELFTH CENTURY

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

THIS story of Ānanda is told in a Chinese Buddhist text and is said to have originated the Buddhist custom of offering food to invisible spirits.

The painting is one of a set of one hundred pictures representing the Five Hundred Arhant, executed in 1178 at Ming Chao, for a pious dedication.

Painted in colors on silk, and mounted as a panel.

PLATE XXXVII

THE ARHANT (*RAKAN*) DARBHA MALLI-PUTRA ASCENDING TO THE SKY
BY CHOU CHI-CHANG (*SHŪ-KIJO*) AND LIN T'ING-KUEI (*RIN-TEIKEI*)

PLATE XXXVII

THE ARHANT (*Rakan*) DARBHA MALLI-PUTRA ASCENDING TO THE SKY IN CONTEMPLATION OF WATER AND FIRE

BY CHOU CHI-CHANG (*Shū-kijo*) AND LIN T'ING-KUEI (*Rin-teikei*)

CHINESE, TWELFTH CENTURY

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

FOR the story of Darbha (Pāli, *Dabba*), see Albert J. Edmunds, *Buddhist and Christian Gospels* (Philadelphia, 1909), vol. II, pp. 174–75.

The painting is one of a set of one hundred pictures representing the Five Hundred Arhant, executed in 1178 at Ming Chao, for a pious dedication.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a panel.

expanse of water, or possibly she hears the melodies of the breeze singing through the trees overhead. This is a manifestation of the goddess of mercy, Kwannon, to whom, under a very different aspect, I have already referred.[1] The same deity is often shown, too, sitting on a dragon among clouds (Plate XXXIII), or standing with a branch of willow in one hand, — seeming to be in possession of the great power of nature, or merely to loiter in the open country, — whether with the object of enjoying the grandeur and calmness about her or of helping others to a similar enjoyment, may be left to the decision of the onlooker. In like manner, Monju, god of wisdom, is represented as a lovely boy reading a scroll, while his lion plays near by (Plate XXXIV), or as a weird old man seated on a lion (Plate XXXV); and Fugen, another god of wisdom, appears as a simple youth or as a young woman riding on an elephant. Such pictures are not meant to be worshipped, but to give pleasure, — the pleasure of serene composure, of pure simplicity, of the beauty of slender human figures.

Buddha's disciples, the *Rakan*,[2] are often represented in a group against a background of mountain scenery, each of them enjoying, silently and by himself, the spectacle of nature presented to his illumined mind (Plates XXXVI and XXXVII). These pictures of the *Rakan* are akin in spirit and delineation to those of the Taoist hermits and sages, called in Chinese, *Hsien*,[3] or "Men of the Mountains"; and here let me say a word about the connection between *Zen* and Taoism. "The wind, Nature's flute, sweeping across trees and waters, sings many melodies. Even so, the Tao, the great Mood, expresses Itself through different minds and ages yet remains ever Itself."[4] This saying of a great Taoist master expresses the mood of the Taoist culture, whose purpose, like that of *Zen*, was to overcome worldly troubles and find an everlasting repose in the calm enjoyment of nature. Such ideas, fostered and developed among the Chinese of the Yang-tzŭ Valley, manifested their influence not only in a naturalism which involved

[1] See Plates VII, XIX and XX A, B & C.

[2] Sanskrit, *Arhant*, which originally meant "the venerable"; but the Chinese *Lo-han*, or its Japanese equivalent, *Rakan*, is associated with the men "emancipated" or living out of the world.

[3] Japanese, *Sennin*.

[4] Quoted from Chuang Tzŭ by Okakura, in *The Ideals of the East*, p. 46. See further pages 43–60 of the same book. *Tao* literally means "The Way," not in an ethical sense but something like Jakob Böhme's *Urgrund*.

an almost misanthropic abandonment of the worldly life, but also in an individualism exemplified in the persons of many hermits who, seeking the seclusion of forest, hill and stream, remote from human abode, indulged in "pure conversation" among themselves, or expressed their feeling for nature in poems of simple motive; and, immersed in these pursuits, survived to ages far beyond the lot of ordinary mortals (Plate XXXVIII). This culture, or rather inspired unculture, is what I have already pointed out as the associate of *Zen* in southern China, and in many cases a Zenist and a Taoist cannot be distinguished.

The "Men of the Mountains" depicted by *Zen* painters are taken from the semi-legendary poets, hermits and sages of Taoism, whose sentiment toward nature has, in this way, permeated the art and life of the Japanese, especially since the fourteenth century. As represented in the pictures, one or more of these Immortals may exhibit the weird art of floating through the sky; another projects his own image from his mouth; another causes a horse to come out of a gourd. Yet they were admired not as mere magicians but as embodiments of the attainment in *Zen* through which an adept could spiritually perform similar feats, such as the act of "inhaling and exhaling the whole universe at one breath," as it is called. They were not supernatural men; on the contrary the "Men of the Mountains" were children of nature, and are shown amusing themselves in nature. Plates XXXIX and XL depict two such beings, Chinese poets of the seventh century. The one, Han-Shan,[1] or "Cool-Hill," has a blank scroll, implying that he reads the unwritten book of nature. The other, Shih-Tê,[2] or "Picking-up," holds a broom, — the broom of insight, of wisdom, of transcendence, — with which to brush away all the dusts of worry and trouble. To read the book of nature: that is the ideal of *Zen* naturalism and intuitionism; to sweep off all troubles: that is the motto of *Zen* individualism and transcendentalism.

In addition to such themes the *Zen* artists were extremely fond of painting landscapes. Of these, one specimen has been described, and all others (Plates XLI and XLII) are similar in feeling, although, of course, there is great variety among them in composition and in the scenes repre-

[1] Japanese, *Kanzan*.

[2] Japanese, *Jittoku*.

PLATE XXXVIII

The Three Laughers of Hu-hsi (*Kokei*). By Soga Shōhaku

PLATE XXXVIII

The Three Laughers of Hu-hsi (*Kokei*)

By Soga Shōhaku, 1730–83

Japanese, Post-Ashikaga Idealistic School

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The social disintegration which characterized the fourth and fifth centuries in China had the effect of causing many able men to turn their backs upon the world and seek the seclusion of the mountains, where they lived immersed in their own pursuits. In the time of Hsiao Wu (373–96), tenth Emperor of the Eastern Chin dynasty, there lived in Mount Lu (*Ro-san*) a priest named Hui Yüan (*E-on*) who for thirty years had fulfilled a vow never to cross the little bridge which connected his retreat in Hu-hsi (*Tiger Dale*) with the road leading to the world he had quitted. On one occasion, however, when his best friends, T'ao Yüan-ming (*Tō Enmei*) and Lu Hsiu-ching (*Riku Shūsei*), had been visiting him and he went to see them off, the three were so absorbed in merry talk that the monk unconsciously crossed the bridge. Having become aware of this they stopped and laughed together. This story is frequently taken as a theme of *Zen* painting to illustrate, in part, the mood of hermit life; and the sympathy with which it is depicted in the present instance may be attributed to the fact that the artist, a man of undoubted genius, being contemptuous of the degenerate art of his time, and ambitious to revive the vigorous style of the fifteenth century, was so ridiculed by his contemporaries that he retired into solitude, even as Hui Yüan had done before him.

Painted in ink on paper and mounted as a two-fold screen.

PLATE XXXIX

HAN SHAN (*KANZAN*) AND SHIH-TÊ (*JITTOKU*)

PLATE XXXIX

HAN-SHAN (*Kanzan*) AND SHIH-TÈ (*Jittoku*)

Artist unknown

JAPANESE, LATE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

THE two Chinese poet-hermits are here depicted in a manner thoroughly characteristic of the idealistic *Zen* painters of Ashikaga times. The inscription above is by Sonan (1403–89), a *Zen* monk, known also as Ryōgen. It is written from left to right and reads as follows: "When these two met they could not refrain from smiling at each other. One sometimes carried a scroll in his hand, and the other gazed at the moon, — pointing her out. But see, in the west stands Mount O-mei (Lofty Eyebrows) — in the north, Wu-t'ai (Five Terraces), and it is now ten years since these two poets departed thither."

Painted in ink on paper and mounted as a *kakemono.*

未婦未
北五臺十年作客
月煩指點西青戴眉
或經卷在手中或語
兩箇相逢笑面難掩
村菴

PLATE XL

Shih-Tê (*Jittoku*). By Gei-ami

PLATE XL

Shih-Tê (*Jittoku*)

By Gei-ami, Fifteenth Century

Japanese, Ashikaga Idealistic School

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The recluse poet is here shown smiling at the moon. His besom lies on the ground at his feet.

Painted in ink on paper and mounted as a *kakemono*.

PLATE XLI

A Chinese Landscape. In the style of Soga Shūbun

PLATE XLI

A Chinese Landscape

In the Style of Soga Shūbun, Early Fifteenth Century

Japanese, Ashikaga Idealistic School

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The descriptive poem at the top of the picture is by the *Zen* monk Ryūtaku Ten-in, commonly known as Moku-un, and is dated in the early summer of 1500, — the year in which the poet died at the age of seventy-nine. It says: —

Waking from an afternoon doze, he opens the lattice giving on the river bank.
Behold the violet hills reflected in the blue expanse of water!
From above heaven looks down, as though in pity, on the solitary man;
And below on the sandy beach, a pair of water birds has come to rest.

Painted in ink on paper and mounted as a *kakemono.*

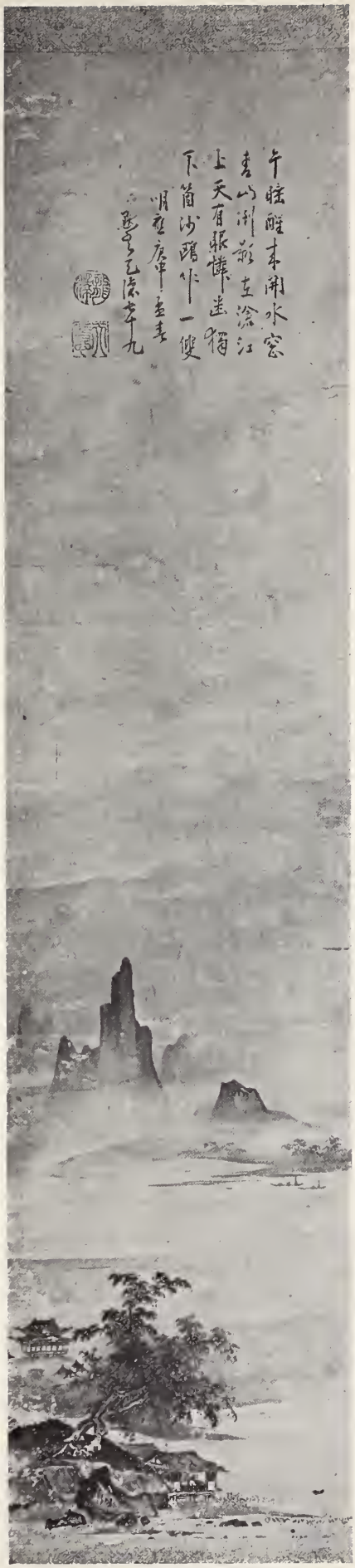


PLATE XLII

A Chinese Landscape. By Josetsu

PLATE XLII

A Chinese Landscape
By Josetsu, Early Fifteenth Century
Japanese, Ashikaga Idealistic School
In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Painted in ink on paper and mounted as a *kakemono.*

sented. The grandeur or tranquillity of nature seen through the spiritual eyes of one purified by long training in *Zen;* the changes of life and season absorbed into the calm depth of contemplation; — such impressions the painter strove to catch with simple, bold strokes of his brush and with little color. Distant hills like shadows; water marked out by a few ripples; sails and boats just dotted in; rocks and trees drawn with a few touches; these make up a landscape. Human figures are often added to the scene, and appear to be gazing beyond the expanse of water, or loitering in the moonlight, or looking up at the cliffs and waterfalls. They are meant to be Taoists or Zenists whose presence in the picture shows that they are seeing the view as reflected in their purified minds.

This point brings us to the connection between painting and poetry in *Zen* art. To the fact that Chinese characters — the written symbols developed in China and later adopted in Japan — were originally pictures representing objects, conditions and abstract ideas, may be attributed the ancient regard for drawing and writing as correlated arts of equal importance, both of them executed with the same breadth and flexibility of line, and by means of the same implement. But it was the Zenists who intensified this calligraphic affinity by expressing their characteristic sense of nature in combinations of painting and poetry. Thus a *Zen* monk would compose a poem like this: "The world is suffused with the pure moonlight; no cloud nor dust is in the sky. The vast expanse of water reflects the heavenly rays; and, far beyond, distant hills appear as in a dream. The pines on the beach sing the music of the calm night; and I [1] stand here, my mind absorbed into the sky and water, — melted into the one serene paleness." Then, under a calligraphic writing of this poem, the scene will be depicted with the same ink and brush and in kindred strokes. For example, among the writings mounted on the landscape of Sesshū (Plate XXIX), there is a poem to the following effect: —

"Is water identical with waves?
No, but the mind, that is like water!
Clouds gather in the valley and disperse again,
Whither the mind alone can follow."

[1] A Zenist would object to the personal pronouns "I" and "my," because to lose one's self in nature is essential from his point of view.

Such is the usual device of the Zenist poet and painter united in one person, and in this association of poetry and painting he exhibited again the fusion of mind and nature.

Animal life is sometimes touched by the *Zen* artists, the dragon and the tiger being their favorites. The tiger glares at the sky where the dragon is partly seen amid the dark clouds (Plates XLIII A & XLIII B). The earthly beast roars and the air whirls; the heavenly serpent mounts upward through the vapors which crowd about him. In the one was seen a power which could shake hills and rocks; in the other a power ruling the air and heaven. Which would control the other? "Have you seen the dragon?" wrote Mr. Okakura.[1] "Approach him cautiously, for no mortal can survive the sight of his entire body. The Eastern dragon is not the gruesome monster of mediæval imagination, but the genius of strength and goodness. He is the spirit of change, therefore of life itself. . . . Hidden in the caverns of inaccessible mountains, or coiled in the unfathomed depth of the sea, he awaits the time when he slowly rouses himself into activity. He unfolds himself in the storm clouds; he washes his mane in the blackness of the seething whirlpools. His claws are in the fork of the lightning, his scales begin to glisten in the bark of rain-swept pine trees. His voice is heard in the hurricane which, scattering the withered leaves of the forest, quickens a new spring. The dragon reveals himself only to vanish." In this contending pair the Zenists saw a graphic representation of the all-controlling forces which break down terrestrial distinctions and fuse together heaven and earth. This, as an aspect of their world view, is inherent in their practice of contemplation, which enabled them, as they believed, to pull down the stars and uplift the mountains, — but all spiritually and ideally.

I have now arrived at the stage in my exposition where I can point out definitely the final steps in the secularization of *Zen* art. The dragon and tiger may be tamed, both in the mind of a Zenist and by the brush of a painter. They may easily be made to serve a decorative purpose, and

[1] Okakura, *The Awakening of Japan*, pp. 77–78.

PLATES XLIII A, XLIII B

Dragon and Tiger. By Hasegawa Tōhaku

PLATES XLIII A & XLIII B

DRAGON AND TIGER

BY HASEGAWA TŌHAKU, SIXTEENTH CENTURY

JAPANESE, POST-ASHIKAGA IDEALISTIC SCHOOL

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

PAINTED in ink on paper and mounted as a pair of six-fold screens.

A

B

PLATE XLIV

A Travesty on Fugen. By Katsukawa Shunshō

PLATE XLIV

A Travesty on Fugen

By Katsukawa Shunshō (1726–92)

Japanese, Ukiyo-é School

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The deity is represented as a courtesan mounted on an elephant standing among clouds which arise from incense said to be endowed with the magic power of revealing to any man the image of his dead or ideal beloved. Above is a didactic inscription by Katō Chikage (1735–1806), a scholar in the Japanese classics. It alludes to the Buddhist doctrine of non-attachment, and is intended as a comment on the picture from that point of view, inasmuch as Fugen is the god of wisdom who dispels the illusion of vain attachment. It says: "Sometimes, allured by beauty one feels passionate attachment (to a woman); sometimes, attracted by a voice, one becomes ensnared in love, which, being pondered in the mind and expressed by the mouth, intensifies illusory ideas. Indeed, all men are charmed by the objects of the senses, and commit sins by the organs. Thus the soul is deluded by what is seen or heard." This is a weak echo of Buddhist teaching, written in a pleasure-loving age and added to a picture of entirely worldly motive.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a *kakemono*.

PLATE XLV

A Travesty on Han-Shan (*Kanzan*) and Shih-Tê (*Jittokū*)
By Katsukawa Shunshō

PLATE XLV

A Travesty on Han-Shan (*Kanzan*) and Shih-Tê (*Jittoku*)

By Katsukawa Shunshō (1726–92)

Japanese, Ukiyo-é School

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

The two poet-hermits are here represented as women: one reading a love-letter instead of the blank scroll peculiar to Han-Shan; the other holding an ordinary indoor broom instead of the besom carried by Shih-Tê.

Painted in colors on silk and mounted as a *kakemono.*

indeed the *Zen* temples show various examples of dragons so used. Moreover, a *Zen* landscape may be enjoyed by any man, if not exactly in the spirit in which it was painted, then simply as a picture of nature's beauty. Representations of the saints, hermits and deities may be regarded as mere human figures in interesting, if not weird, postures, and may attract many art lovers, almost apart from the associated stories of attainment in *Zen* enlightenment. Thus it was only one step from this idealistic art to a romantic art and thence to an art of realistic motive. The landscape of *Zen* painting became a strong incentive to, and model for, the secular landscape and was further applied to decorative art. The human figures of manifold attitudes were transformed to the uses of worldly life. A temporal form of the god of wisdom has already been referred to (Plate XXXIV), and I can add many other examples of similar sort, such as Daruma soothed by a woman, or the *Rakan* at play. These are cases in which a secularization of Buddhist art is indeed apparent; but the process was carried so far by the later *genre* painters that Fugen came to be represented as a courtesan reading a love-letter (Plate XLIV), and Kwannon as a maid coming from the market with her basket of fish.[1] Such pictures are manifest instances of sacrilege against the *Zen* ideal (Plate XLV); but on the other hand there was a more serious secularization which, though worldly in content, nevertheless retained, in composition and brush strokes, the "wind-frame" of *Zen* painting. In Japan this is first noticeable among works by Kano Masanobu (died 1490?) and his son Motonobu (1475–1559), and has been perpetuated by their descendants of the Kano Academy, an idealistic school with strong romantic tendencies. Another movement in the same direction was the purely decorative school of painting and lacquer work which derived much of its inspiration and method from the mediæval *genre*, and found immortality in the masterpieces of Kōetsu (1556–1637) and Kōrin (1658–1716). This, however, is not the place for a detailed account of these two schools, whose influence is still a

[1] This kind of simplifying and secularization had been in vogue in China since the twelfth century, and so long as it retained the technique of simple ink drawing it was in accordance with the spirit of *Zen*. But when the figure was adapted to *genre* painting and filled in with decorative coloring, it became totally profane. The legend of Fugen appearing as a courtesan in order to convert her suitors to religion is pretty old, and the inscription shown in Plate XLIV retains a trace of the old legend.

formative factor in Japanese art;[1] but it is important to observe that they expressed what may be called the naturalization of *Zen* art in Japan, or in other words the encroachment, on *Zen* idealism, of the Japanese feeling for life and nature, not in abstract transcendence, but in visible concreteness (Plates XLVI and XLVII). Here, surely, was a deviation from the original spirit of *Zen*, but being in no sense revolutionary, the change was carried out almost imperceptibly by natural adaptation of spirit and method.

In this connection we must note the altered form of Buddhist doctrine which became the faith of the whole Kano family as well as of Kōetsu and his followers. The new creed was started in the thirteenth century by the monk Nichiren, and was founded on a broad ambition to unite the best thought of all religions existing in Japan through the teachings of the "Lotus of Truth."[2] This scheme of Buddhist reform was replete with national ideas and laid stress on the necessity and possibility of transforming the actual world into a paradise, — an ideal kingdom of perfection. Though we are not as yet able to point out the intrinsic connection of this Buddhism with the art of the Kano and Kōetsu schools, it is none the less remarkable that Kano Motonobu worked on the decoration of the holy-of-holies of the Nichiren church, and that Kōetsu, himself a doctor of Nichirenite dogmatics, dedicated his abode to the service of a Nichirenite monastery. What Fenollosa says[3] about the Kōetsu school, may be applied, in a religious sense, to a description of Nichirenism: "It is neither realism nor idealism, as we ordinarily misuse these words; it attempts to give an overmastering impression, a feeling vague and peculiarly Japanese, as if the whole past of the race with all its passions and love surged back in a gigantic race memory inwrought in the inherited nerves — a patriotism as gorgeous and free and colossal as one's grandest dreams." Indeed, Nichiren was a great visionary, the prophet of a universal Buddhist Church and, at the same time, a hero of national spirit; and it can hardly be a far-

[1] These points are dealt with in the author's forthcoming book on *Japanese Art in its Relation to Social Life*.

[2] See chapter I.

[3] *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, vol. II, pp. 127–28.

PLATE XLVI

A Cormorant. By Miyamoto Musashi

PLATE XLVI

A Cormorant

By Miyamoto Musashi, 1582–1645

Japanese, Post-Ashikaga Idealistic School

In the possession of Viscount Matsudaira

This picture, done with so few strokes, achieves a greater interest from the fact that the painter was a famous master of fencing in whose mind the art of the brush and the art of the sword were fused together by his *Zen* training.

Painted in ink on paper and mounted as one panel of a six-fold screen.

PLATE XLVII

Sparrow and Chrysanthemums. By Kenzan

PLATE XLVII

Sparrow and Chrysanthemums

By Kenzan, 1663–1743

Japanese, Kōetsu School

In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Painted in pale colors on paper and mounted as a *kakemono*.

fetched interpretation to see in the vigorous national style of the Kanos and of the Kōetsu school an influence of their new faith.[1]

Thus the secularization of *Zen* art proceeded by absorption of the Zenist spirit into daily life, which, in turn, was purified and elevated by religious and æsthetic inspiration. The Zenist would say, in self-confidence, that moonlight could, without lessening its purity and brilliance, penetrate everywhere and be reflected even from dust. The pure moonlight of the Zenist enlightenment permeated every corner of social and domestic existence, primarily through tea and its art, what Mr. Okakura has called "Teaism."[2] Tea is believed to be a calming drink, and the Zenists used to take it sitting in a quiet room around a little hearth let into the floor as a convenience for boiling water. This meeting of those who were united in the cult of serenity became a manifestation of the religion of beauty, — the beauty which lies in subdued tone and tranquil mood. The tea-room was, perhaps, tiny, but it was always scrupulously clean and furnished in the simplest way. Similarly the garden, as well as the trees and stones in it, were arranged in accordance with the "air-rhythm" of the mind purified by *Zen* culture. On one side of the room there was a little alcove, dedicated to the cosmic spirit of simple beauty, wherein a small landscape painting or a calligraphic poem-writing was hung. The smoke of incense rose in the dusk of this space, the incense which never irritated the senses but enabled one to inhale the essence of delicacy and composure. A little gong summoned the guests to this tiny chapel of purity; they proceeded quietly and glided into it; then they drank cups of tea amid surroundings of the utmost calmness. There they would talk only of things outside the world, "wind and moon," "air and stream," or anything else which might help to pacify their minds.

The spirit of *Zen* manifested in Teaism penetrated into the households

[1] As this point was never touched by art critics until my friend T. Sasakawa called attention to it, the inherent connection between Nichirenism and the Japanese schools of painting now awaits further research and more definite elucidation. The work done by Kano Motonobu at Minobu, the sacred place of Nichirenite Buddhism, perished in a fire; but there is, I imagine, still a trace of the great Kano master in the wall paintings of lotus flowers decorating the chapel of Minobu where the relics of the Prophet are piously preserved.

[2] Mr. Okakura's *The Book of Tea*, which the present description faintly reflects, is an admirable introduction to the spirit of Teaism.

of nobles and peasants alike. Every Japanese house is built in a style more or less affected by the atmosphere of the tea-room, and in the main rooms are always the alcoves, the shrines of simple beauty. Beside a picture hanging within, there may be an incense pot, a flower vase, a few scrolls; all other furniture is carefully excluded. A family may possess a rich collection of paintings; but only one or a pair, at most a set of three, would be admitted in a room. The house and its chambers should not be used for an exhibition of art works, because real enjoyment of art should be concentrated on a few precious pieces. The garden, its trees and stone lanterns, the pot for washing-water usually standing on a stone alongside the veranda, even the interior of a latrine, in short, everything that is within or around the house, ought to partake of the purity of the chapel and express in its own way the adoration of nature's beauty. Thus the art of *Zen* was secularized; thus, too, the abodes of man were purified; and throughout we see the Buddhist ideal of communion, no longer made sensible in temples and statues, in ceremonies and rituals, but manifested in the homes of human beings, as a religion of simple beauty, — a cult of nature and of spiritual life.

THE END

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In preparation by M. Anesaki

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